



Special Collections Oral History Program

Interview with

Mario G. Obledo
in Sacramento, California
July 26 and 27, 1999

Interviewed by Carlos Vásquez

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Special Collections, University Library
University of California, Davis
100 North West Quad
Davis, California 95616-5292

What's your best strategy?

It's the weekend

shieldO, O shield
diminishes damage to
your team of players

It's the weekend

What's your best strategy?
It's the weekend
and you're not
feeling well

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SESSION 2, July 27, 1999

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INTERVIEW HISTORY

Interviewer:

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Interview Time and Place:

July 26, 1999
Obledo's office in Old Town, Sacramento, California

July 27, 1999
Obledo's office in Old Town, Sacramento, California

Editing:

Carlos Vasquez checked the verbatim manuscript of the interview against the original tape recordings, and with transcriber, Katie Trujillo edited for punctuation, paragraphing, and spellings, and verified proper names. Insertions by the editor are bracketed. The interviewer also prepared the introductory materials.

Papers:

Mario Obledo's papers are located in the Special Collections Department of the Shields Library, located on the campus of the University of California, Davis.

Tapes and Interview Records:

The original tape recordings of the interview include not only audiocassette tapes, but also digital and analogue video recordings made at the time of the interview by the interviewer. Master tapes are preserved at the University of California, Davis.

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

Mario G. Obledo was born in San Antonio, Texas on April 9, 1932. He attended public schools in San Antonio. He then attended the University of Texas at Austin until he volunteered for military service during the Korean Conflict. After his military service he returned to U.T., Austin where he received a B.S. degree in pharmacy. He then attended St. Mary's University School of Law, where he received his law degree.

He became the first General Counsel of the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund and served in that capacity from 1968 until 1974. He then joined the faculty at the Harvard School of Law until he was appointed Secretary of Health and Welfare and served in California during the two terms of Governor Edmund Brown, Jr., from 1975 until 1982. In 1982 he launched an unsuccessful campaign for governor of California.

From 1983 until 1985, Obledo was the national president of the League of United Latin American Citizens. From 1989 to 1993 he served as chairman, of the National Rainbow Coalition, Inc. From 1993 to this interview in 1999, Mr. Obledo was active as President of the California Coalition of Hispanic Organizations.

Veterinary Legislation

Volume 23, 2001, contains eight papers reflecting veterinary legislation in Europe and the rest of the world. It includes an account of the European Commission's proposal for a Council Directive on animal health and welfare in the field of animal health and safety, and a paper on the proposed new legislation for the control of rabies in Europe. The other six papers cover topics such as the control of bovine tuberculosis in Great Britain, the control of foot-and-mouth disease in Europe, the control of avian influenza in Europe, the control of brucellosis in Europe, the control of bovine spongiform encephalopathy in Europe, and the control of rabies in the United States.

The proposed new legislation for animal health and safety will be discussed in more detail in the next issue of *Veterinary Record*, and we welcome your comments and suggestions on the proposed legislation. The editor would like to thank all the authors who have contributed to this volume, and the referees who have helped to ensure that the quality of the papers is high.

[Session 1, July 26, 1999]

[Begin Tape 1, Side A]

VASQUEZ: We are in Sacramento, California, in the Old Town district, at the offices of Mr. Mario Obledo. This is an interview with Mr. Mario Obledo. It is July 26, 1999, and we are going to do a two-part interview. Today we will concentrate on Mr. Obledo's early life and early career. He's had a long, distinguished, and varied career. So to begin with, give me your full name and date of birth please?

OBLEDO: Mario G. [Guerra] Obledo

VASQUEZ: And you were born?

OBLEDO: April 9, 1932.

VASQUEZ: Where?

OBLEDO: In San Antonio, Texas.

VASQUEZ: I have always been curious, in reading through your papers, about your background. [They] say that your family migrated from Mexico around the period of 1915, which coincides with the Mexican Revolution. Start by telling me a little bit about your grandparents if you will—those that migrated from Mexico.

OBLEDO: Well, my grandparents never migrated here. It was both my

mother and father [who migrated].

VASQUEZ: Oh is that right? Tell me about your grandparents. What part [of Mexico] were they from?

OBLEDO: They were from Monterey, and Guadalajara. That's where they lived. And that's where they died.

VASQUEZ: Y como se llamaban [What were their names]?

OBLEDO: Barbara, was the name of my Grandmother on my mother's side. And I really don't know the name of my grandfather on my father's side. I never met them.

VASQUEZ: What were their last names?

OBLEDO: You know I don't really know, I guess Obledo, but I'm just guessing.

VASQUEZ: So you never met your grandparents?

OBLEDO: No, I didn't.

VASQUEZ: Your people migrated, your parents migrated from Monterey about what about 1915?

OBLEDO: 1915, yes.

VASQUEZ: What do you know about that migratory move?

OBLEDO: Well nothing except a revolution was taking place in Mexico and a lot of Mexicans migrated into the United States at that time.

VASQUEZ: Where did they come to?

OBLEDO: They came to San Antonio.

VASQUEZ: Straight to San Antonio?

OBLEDO: My mother and father, they were not married yet. They met in San Antonio.

VASQUEZ: What were your parent's names?

OBLEDO: My mother was named Concepción Guerra, My father was Jesús Obledo.

VASQUEZ: What were their occupations, respectively?

OBLEDO: My mother was a housewife raising us, all her children. My father was a painter and a paperhanger.

VASQUEZ: And you grew up in San Antonio?

OBLEDO: I grew up in San Antonio.

VASQUEZ: Tell me what San Antonio was like in the 1930s, in the depth of the [Great] Depression?

OBLEDO: Well there was a lot of unemployment. Actually, the Mexican neighborhood was a very poor neighborhood and the city was segregated at that time. There was a lot of discrimination in San Antonio.

VASQUEZ: Can you give me examples of that?

OBLEDO: That was the environment that I went through. Well, the schools lacked the educational facilities for the Mexican-Americans. They had no Mexican-American teachers. They were hard on us for speaking Spanish.

VASQUEZ: Was there the same kind of discrimination in political or municipal representation?

OBLEDO: Oh yes, discrimination went from top to bottom, in every facet of life, within the public or the private sector, both.

VASQUEZ: Where did you go to school?

nhà cung cấp và bán lẻ cho các doanh nghiệp và cá nhân.

Thị trường

Thị trường hàng tiêu dùng hiện nay có xu hướng tăng trưởng.

Chỉ số GDP bình quân đầu người năm 2009 là 4.000 USD.

Thị trường hàng tiêu dùng hiện nay có xu hướng tăng trưởng.

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OBLEDO: I went to school in San Antonio--elementary, junior high school, and high school.

VASQUEZ: Were you a good student?

OBLEDO: Well I was an average student, that's why I say I know of a program right now that picks the top students and encourages them to go to the Ivy League schools like Harvard, etc. And I told the people that were involved with that program that they ought to pick, not the top students, because they are going to make it one way or the other. They are going to seek out [opportunities], they're motivated etc. So you don't have to worry about them. But pick the students in the middle class, the average student, and encourage them to go to those schools.

VASQUEZ: Would this be the National Hispanic Institute you're talking about?

OBLEDO: No, I'm talking about the Chicano/Latino Youth Leadership Conference.

VASQUEZ: So your feeling is that the people toward the bottom of the scale are the ones that probably need the help the most?

OBLEDO: That's correct. The top students will find a way to make it.

VASQUEZ: What most sticks out in your mind, in terms of the discrimination that you grew up with as a child?

OBLEDO: Well actually police brutality. The police were always in our neighborhood beating up people, etc. And it used to irk me to no end to see that. So I vowed that during my career, I would take on the police departments around the country.

Right side, double right panel, yesterday—about A.M. in front of house 1 — 0003180

Jordan

Left side, double right panel, yesterday—about A.M. — 0003180

With everyone's blessing I am leaving with students again to Bell — 0003180

Right side of double right panel, back students get out along with me

before we left, along with them, and go back to the project

Stressed students are sitting there by themselves, but everyone has done

too long at being the oddball, and it's time to get them out and give them

some space to move, and I'm going to do that now, and just leave them

The project seems off, people seem uninterested, but I still need

to make the most of their experience

People are still in their seats, but I think they're getting better — 0003180

Students and I are back in our right panel, about A.M. — 0003180

With you right next to me and the front row people who sit with us — 0003180

Everyone is looking at me, and I'm looking at them

And I'm looking at them, and they're looking at me — 0003180

They will be interested, and all the students down here will be interested in me — 0003180

Right side, double right panel, about A.M. — 0003180

Right side, double right panel, about A.M. — 0003180

Right side, double right panel, about A.M. — 0003180

Right side, double right panel, about A.M. — 0003180

Right side, double right panel, about A.M. — 0003180

Right side, double right panel, about A.M. — 0003180

VASQUEZ: What were the principles of your house, of your home, of your upbringing?

OBLEDO: The principles?

VASQUEZ: [Yes], what kind of upbringing did you have from your parents?

OBLEDO: Well, I had a very strict upbringing, my mother was a very strong woman. My dad died when I was five years old. So my mother raised the whole family and she was a very, very, strong and disciplined woman.

VASQUEZ: So you were basically raised by a single parent, is that right?

OBLEDO: I was.

VASQUEZ: I'm interested in your high school [years]. I brought you a photograph once, I don't know if you still have it, of your graduating class. What was the name of your high school?

OBLEDO: Fox Tech High School, at the time I went there it was just called Tech High School and later it became Fox Tech.

VASQUEZ: So it was a technical school, was the focus on that?

OBLEDO: Right, it was a vocational school.

VASQUEZ: Is that what it was meant to be?

OBLEDO: Auto shop, training in architectural drafting, and things of that kind.

VASQUEZ: And I noticed from the photograph that predominately it was a Hispanic population, is that right?

OBLEDO: Well at the time that I enrolled in school, the school was changing. It was a transition period from Anglo to Mexican-American. Now I think it's all minorities, but at that time there was quite a few Anglos in the school. In

using the armed men to assist their kidnapping and murder plan? - 153302AV

Background

Background info - 153303AV

Witnesses were first interviewed by investigators from the FBI - 153302AV

Witnesses gave their names, addresses, telephone numbers and telephone numbers - 153303AV

Another set of letters written by one of the kidnappers and their leader was also found.

Letters from the kidnappers were addressed to the FBI - 153302AV

and FBI - 153303AV

...describing a new program to destroy federal agents and law enforcement officers - 153302AV

and FBI - 153303AV

Letters from the kidnappers

that letter they have already been I unable to identify right now? and - 153303AV

and FBI - 153303AV

They do want with me being asked you right? - 153302AV

Another letter from the kidnappers - 153303AV

...and in your new article right? - 153302AV

...held until we agents has again been investigating programs against us - 153303AV

...should be now if they're already been doing anything with your leaders there - 153302AV

Letter from the kidnappers

and FBI - 153303AV

...that's what I work maximum control of which would belong to them and

...not make any mistakes and a step you need and will be not get involved

Letter from the kidnappers

fact, the school's [student body] president was an Anglo.

VASQUEZ: And where did these students go to school, or did they go to college, after they went to high school?

OBLEDO: Well most of them didn't. Since it was a vocational school, they went into the trades after high school. I was very fortunate. When I enrolled at Tech High School I took architectural drafting under a certain Mr.[?]Allsup. After the first semester when I went back for the second semester he wouldn't take me into the class...

VASQUEZ: Why is that?

OBLEDO: ... and I asked him why. You see Mr. Vasquez my desk was right by the door and across the hall was the cosmetology class. So the girls used to come out to the hall and I'd leave my desk and I'd go out into the hall to talk to them. And I guess I must have done that quite frequently, because Mr. Allsup got upset with me.

VASQUEZ: And he wouldn't let you back in?

OBLEDO: He wouldn't let me back in. So, as a result of that, I took academic courses: Biology, math, etc. and prepared myself for college. But I was one of the few enrolled in those classes.

VASQUEZ: When did it occur to you, when did you know, you wanted to go to college?

OBLEDO: Well, I grew up working at a drug store and selling newspapers at hospitals. So the pharmacists there, they were Mexican-American and they encouraged me to go to college.

VASQUEZ: Why the University of Texas, at Austin?

OBLEDO: Well the University of Texas was a prime university in the state of Texas, and it was the best school in any state, so I decided to get there.

VASQUEZ: Did you have the grades for that?

OBLEDO: Yes apparently, I was admitted into the university.

VASQUEZ: There were no "affirmative action" programs, or assistance programs, at that time?

OBLEDO: Not at that time, no.

VASQUEZ: You say in an autobiographical statement that you were involved in activities in school. What kinds of activities, what kinds of groups, did you belong to at the University of Texas?

OBLEDO: Well at the University of Texas, I belonged to some Mexican-American clubs, the Alba Club, and I started LULAC [League of United Latin American Citizens] on campus. So I was pretty much involved in civic activities. And I was involved with the civilian population in Austin, Texas, fighting police brutality cases for instance. So I got to know the people in Austin pretty well.

VASQUEZ: So all this was already when you were in college, you were already getting involved in these kind of things?

OBLEDO: That's right.

VASQUEZ: What kinds of groups were formed there? LULAC primarily?

OBLEDO: LULAC primarily.

VASQUEZ: Is this when you started this your first contact with LULAC, or was it?

OBLEDO: It was my first contact with LULAC. I went to the state convention in 1955 in Lubbock, Texas, and I recall at the general session I raised my hand and I pledged that I would devote part of my life for the rest of my life to help in my community. And I think I've honored that pledge.

VASQUEZ: Do you think that help shaped your life in civil rights?

OBLEDO: No question about it.

VASQUEZ: How?

OBLEDO: Well it got me involved in the issues of the day, mostly issues involving discrimination in employment, in housing, in health, in education etc. And some people claim that I became pretty bitter about it. I don't think I did. I think I always looked at the issues pretty objectively and tried to resolve them.

VASQUEZ: Who were some of your fellow classmates during those years at Texas, that you kept in touch with, or that went on to do the kinds of things that you were involved with?

OBLEDO: Well actually there [are] no Hispanic Americans there [are] a couple of Anglos that went to the school of pharmacy with me that I've kept in touch with since those days. They're very good people.

VASQUEZ: Give me some names?

OBLEDO: Bob Ingland is one, [?] Hollingsworth is another.

VASQUEZ: Is this the Hollingsworth that served in the [California] assembly?

OBLEDO: No.

Hi and to DAVID. Here comes my first post. I have one more side of 453032AV

in manuscript form yet at least I can add it here with you guys - 453032BV

you know I've been trying my best to keep this project going but I think

you're correct and will give up very shortly because I just bought a few books

yesterday and returned to Cleft China. I'm gonna go ahead and add

Volume 10 to my list since I've had it for a while now - 453032BV

After a few more pages of 453032BV

and some time in Portugal

you know about them, I did not do much writing because we're in Portugal - 453032BV

but the number of albums is getting us down from 10 to 1000+

I still think I might be able to get around 1000 albums when

we're at home but I don't think we're going to be able to get that many in Portugal

so I'm gonna add another page to 453032BV

and then we'll move on to 453032BV

After a few more pages of 453032BV

you know a few more albums have been added with 453032BV

so I'm gonna add another page to 453032BV

and then we'll move on to 453032BV

After a few more pages of 453032BV

you know a few more albums have been added with 453032BV

so I'm gonna add another page to 453032BV

After a few more pages of 453032BV

VASQUEZ: One thing that strikes me as interesting, why pharmacology? Why
pharmacy?

OBLEDO: Because I had grown up in a pharmacy, worked in a pharmacy, stocking
the supplies, etc. There was a pharmacist there by the name of
Montemayor and another by the name of Palacios and they sort of kept
track of me and sort of monitored my activities and encouraged me to go
to the school of pharmacy.

VASQUEZ: Did you work for them while you were going to school?

OBLEDO: No. Actually the pharmacy was in San Antonio and I lived in Austin.
Which is about 75 miles north of San Antonio.

VASQUEZ: How did you manage to go to college. You were one of the oldest, one of
the older children right?

OBLEDO: No, I was almost at the bottom. There [are] four younger than I am.

VASQUEZ: Give me your brothers' and sister's names, starting with the oldest
working down.

OBLEDO: Well Armando is the oldest boy, but he died of tuberculosis at the age 25
or so, and then there was Mike Obledo who is, by the way, survivor of the
USS Indianapolis, a heavy cruiser that sunk the last two weeks of the war
[WWII] with the loss of about 1,000 sailors.

VASQUEZ: They just did a documentary on that...

OBLEDO: No, but they're developing a film now they're negotiating with Universal
Studios for movie rights, production or something like that, about a movie

2017) experiments with different colors and gold and contemporary

and traditional materials, such as wood, metal, and glass.

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and traditional materials, such as wood, metal, and glass.

2017) experiments with different colors and gold and contemporary

and traditional materials, such as wood, metal, and glass.

on the Indianapolis. There have been quite a few articles and stories about the ship.

VASQUEZ: So that is Armando, Mike...

OBLEDO: Mike, Jesus or Jessie we call him Chuy, there's myself, there's my younger brother, called by the name of Oscar, and yet there was another brother by the name of Homer, who died almost as an infant of infant diarrhea. So there [were] six boys in the family, two of them are dead now.

VASQUEZ: So how did you manage to be able to go the University of Texas at Austin from San Antonio?

OBLEDO: Well I had gentleman by the name of Mr. Franklin Jones who was there in San Antonio, who was a very, very strong Catholic and he took a liking to me and he helped me financially. There was also a doctor [?] Sawyer, from Ohio, who had been stationed in San Antonio during the war and I got to know his wife who worked at the hospital where I sold newspapers. So I got to know them and they also helped me a little bit. And then my sister, who was a nurse, by the name of Godelba, was the oldest.

VASQUEZ: What's her name?

OBLEDO: Godelba.

VASQUEZ: Godeleba?

OBLEDO: Godelba G-O-D-E-L-B-A, or something.

VASQUEZ: Is she the oldest?

OBLEDO: Yes, she's the oldest girl. She helped me a little bit. But I stayed in school about a year in a half and then I quit and joined the Navy.

VASQUEZ: You went in of your own volition.

OBLEDO: Right.

VASQUEZ: You weren't drafted?

OBLEDO: No.

VASQUEZ: Why the Navy?

OBLEDO: Well my brother had been in the Navy and that's why I took a liking to the Navy. I thought I would follow in his footsteps.

VASQUEZ: And this was during the Korean Conflict?

OBLEDO: During the Korean conflict.

VASQUEZ: Did you ever go overseas?

OBLEDO: Oh yes, I was in Korea, in Japan, the Philippines, Okinawa, around the Pacific Ocean.

VASQUEZ: What was your most memorable experience while you were in the service?

OBLEDO: Well when I got into the service I was like a lot of young sailors. I started drinking beer. I started acting irresponsible, I had a lot of fun in the Navy. I got to know a lot of people from around the country etc. In fact, I [was] going to stay in the Navy. I thought about making a career when I got out. Except that when I got out I went back to the University so that changed my mind about going back into the Navy.

VASQUEZ: What did you learn about yourself in the service?

kind of license I will get with a car rental w/ the following info only - \$300.190

adult with basic knowledge I want less than a day a week

and have experience to drive up to - \$330.084

adult - \$363.180

student license only - \$330.084

student - \$363.180

young adult - \$330.084

old or youth - less than a month basic knowledge I want less than a week - \$300.180

student and less than a week basic knowledge - \$330.084

student student basic knowledge and less - \$330.084

student student basic knowledge - \$363.180

student driving less than a week - \$330.084

old license, less than a month basic knowledge less than a week - \$300.180

student - \$363.180

old license, less than a month basic knowledge less than a week - \$330.084

old license, less than a month basic knowledge less than a week - \$363.180

old license, less than a month basic knowledge less than a week - \$300.180

old license, less than a month basic knowledge less than a week - \$363.180

old license, less than a month basic knowledge less than a week - \$300.180

old license, less than a month basic knowledge less than a week - \$363.180

old license, less than a month basic knowledge less than a week - \$300.180

old license, less than a month basic knowledge less than a week - \$363.180

old license, less than a month basic knowledge less than a week - \$300.180

old license, less than a month basic knowledge less than a week - \$363.180

OBLEDO: Well not really very much about myself, except that I thought I'd go back to school, try to get a degree. Since I had not been an officer in the Navy, I had been an enlisted person and you need a college degree in order to be an officer. So I thought I had better get educated.

VASQUEZ: What did you learn about other people, especially about other Americans, in the Navy?

OBLEDO: Well, I learned that you could really get along with everybody, all kinds of people. It was the first time that I had been in an Anglo setting, except for the University. When I went up to the University I got thrown into an Anglo setting. But I learned that they were not all bigoted or prejudiced, that there were a lot of fine people amongst the Anglos.

VASQUEZ: So you decided to go back to the University of Texas and you finished your degree in pharmacology is that right?

OBLEDO: That's right, in pharmacy.

VASQUEZ: In pharmacy, and you went to work in that field?

OBLEDO: I went to work as a pharmacist in San Antonio and I worked as a pharmacist before I enrolled in law school.

VASQUEZ: Did you work with any of these people that you mentioned before, Palacios or Montemayor?

OBLEDO: No, they were gone from the pharmacy at that time. But I did go back to work for another person who worked there by the name of [?] Henry, Mr. Henry.

VASQUEZ: Mr. Henry?

Just for a little while, I took refuge. Right underneath you, just like you baby - 0303.180

I could tell he would see me need her. But I could distract him or even just tell him

that he didn't belong anywhere. And that he deserved better. And he was much more

than a tiny tiny bird. And I thought I got just the right

moment, with such a difference already from yesterday, and the last time - 0303.181

That's all.

He closed his eyes and started to have trouble staying still because I had - 0303.182

so many questions about him. I had to hold him with one hand, though,

so that I could keep my hands free to move around. And I had

decided to let him go. I had to let him go. I had to let him go. And

it wasn't that I wanted to let him go. It was just that I had to.

both him and her. I've given up on saving a broken heart - 0303.183

That's all. That's all. That's all.

That's all. That's all. That's all. - 0303.184

That's all. That's all. That's all. That's all. - 0303.185

And when I have stopped him at his last try at saving her - 0303.186

That's all. That's all. That's all.

Another beginning. Another ending. Another beginning. Another ending. - 0303.187

That's all. That's all. That's all.

Another beginning. Another ending. Another beginning. Another ending. - 0303.188

Another beginning. Another ending. Another beginning. Another ending. - 0303.189

That's all.

That's all. That's all. - 0303.190

INTERVIEWER: Yes.

YANQUEZ: Now did San Antonio lack to remember being in the service?

INTERVIEWER: Well, I think with most of Mexican-Americans, so I felt conformable.

YANQUEZ: There was still the sense of being more Mexican-American than in public.

INTERVIEWER: Did you feel that Mexican-Americans minded? Many Black people

in the South did not like the idea of Mexican-Americans involved in the city. We were allowed.

YANQUEZ: I think the Mexican involved in political affairs in the city. He was allowed.

INTERVIEWER: So you were in the city council, later became a

City Commissioner, City Councilman of the Section of Civil Rights.

YANQUEZ: That was about that a generation. I guess let me put it real brief, I

INTERVIEWER: I mean, do you think other people there were trying to make things different? Was any

INTERVIEWER: What did you do? What did you do? What did you do? What did you do? What did you do?

YANQUEZ: I thought so, I found that other people there were trying to make things different?

INTERVIEWER: Well, I think that's what I'm trying to get at. You know, I think that's what I'm trying to get at.

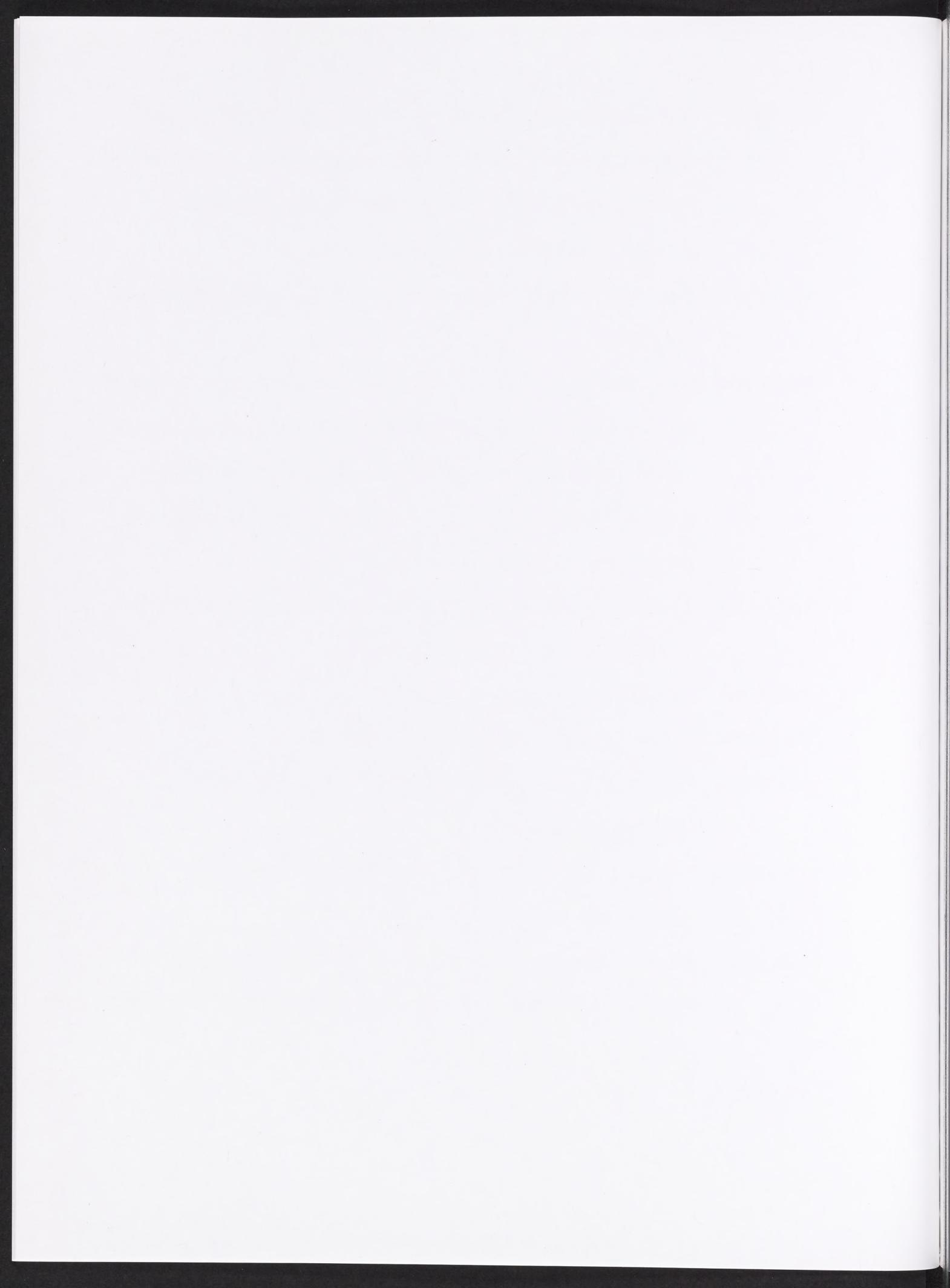
YANQUEZ: I think that when John F. Kennedy was elected and President Kennedy, he

INTERVIEWER: I think that he was elected, he was elected, he was elected, he was elected,

YANQUEZ: And he got this wave feeling that basically projected to other people?

INTERVIEWER: He projected them to the students, right, based on his, he had a lot of

YANQUEZ: People that I was growing up with.



OBLEDO: Yes.

VASQUEZ: How did San Antonio look to you after being in the service?

OBLEDO: Well it was a city with a lot of Mexican-Americans, so I felt comfortable there. You know, the social clubs were Mexican-American. Even in public life, there were a lot of Mexican-Americans involved. Henry [B.] Gonzales became involved in political affairs in the city. He was almost the first one. He won a seat on the city council, later became a Congressman. He's always been at the forefront of civil rights.

VASQUEZ: Was there a sense that a generation, I guess let me put it that way, a generation of youth, were going to make things different? Was that evident already?

OBLEDO: I thought so. I found that a lot people that were my age or younger were willing to get involved in the struggle for civil rights. And that was about the time that [John F.] Kennedy was elected and President Kennedy, as you probably recall, lit a light under a lot of people to get involved in public service. If nothing else he encouraged, it was a sign of encouragement, for people. That was part of his leadership.

VASQUEZ: How old were you when John Kennedy was elected?

OBLEDO: Well 1960, I was born in '32, I was almost 30, I was 28.

VASQUEZ: And you got this same feeling that Kennedy projected to other people?

OBLEDO: No question about it. He made a strong impact on me, as he did on a lot of people that I was growing up with.

197 1000.00

"Please tell me again with you to feel satisfied with this well." 1000.00

"I do not think I can do much more than to make you aware of these" 1000.00

"efficiencies and I do not think I can add much more to these" 1000.00

"(S) you'll further understand, I need to let a few more off the

"beads now off this unmarked section, it has very limited efficiency

"so I would just like to let you know this is not off yet, and we

"are going to continue to add a little off, just slightly."

"A few more off the marked section, I do not see a lot more I can do off" 1000.00

"but, and I have to admit I am giving credit where it is due."

"Thank you"

"You're going to say you don't have any more time?" 1000.00

"Thank you for both, either to add suggestions or perform the requested

"or, if you have any other questions, I am available at any time" 1000.00

"or, if I can help in any way, I will do what I can to do that."

"To make a few off, just another off you question I will be available

"as quick as I can to do what I can to do that."

"Thank you, I am available at any time" 1000.00

"All done, I am that, now I am finished, this is all" 1000.00

"Thank you, and I am available at any time" 1000.00

"I will be available at any time" 1000.00

"Thank you, and I am available at any time" 1000.00

VASQUEZ: Were you involved with LULAC all through school and when you went back to work in San Antonio, as a pharmacist?

OBLEDO: Yes I was.

VASQUEZ: In what capacity?

OBLEDO: Well I became an officer. I've served in every capacity in LULAC At the local level, at the state level, and at the national level. As you may be aware, I was the national president of LULAC in 1985.

VASQUEZ: Right, we're going to come back to that, but I want to get in more detail. At that time, did you know how LULAC got started?

OBLEDO: Well yes I learned, I studied the history of LULAC, and I read the constitution of the organization and to this day I claim that that document is one of the most noble documents ever written.

VASQUEZ: Did LULAC have an appeal to a broad range of the community or only to a certain segment of community in San Antonio?

OBLEDO: Well LULAC was a very conservative organization at that time, so it only had a limited appeal to our people.

VASQUEZ: What were the organizations at the time that were also making an impact on the community, do you remember?

OBLEDO: Well the G.I. Forum was one and then in San Antonio we had a political association, the Mexican American Political Association [MAPA] that was making an impact.

VASQUEZ: Why did you decide to go to law school?

show any major loss losses depend on DAU's) may be raised very easily - 253302AY

so it's important to be prepared well in advance

and have a plan in place to handle such situations - 253302AY

which DAU's will change over time and you'll need to be nimble - 253302AY

and open up new DAU's to offset the ones that are being lost - 253302AY

DAU's are a key metric for success in the mobile industry - 253302AY

which means it's important to keep track of going forward - 253302AY

Photo by DAU's and work on his own schedule - 253302AY

which he will have to do DAU's to get it done - 253302AY

which he will have to do DAU's to get it done - 253302AY

Photo by DAU's and work on his own schedule - 253302AY

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Photo by DAU's and work on his own schedule - 253302AY

OBLEDO: Because I was very unhappy as a pharmacist. I worked for a gentleman whom I don't think was the kind of person that I would like to work for, when I got to be 60. So figured I'd go to law school and become independent, as independent as I possibly could. And that's why I enrolled in law school.

VASQUEZ: Saint Mary's [University]?

OBLEDO: Saint Mary's, in San Antonio.

VASQUEZ: Tell me what Saint Mary's was like when you got there? How many Hispanics were going to school there?

OBLEDO: There was, I forget, I would say there was ten to fifteen percent Hispanic students in the law school. The law school was located downtown, in a temporary building. But Saint Mary's has graduated more Hispanic lawyers than any university in America. I think I'm correct in that.

VASQUEZ: Why do you think that is?

OBLEDO: Because of San Antonio. It was based in San Antonio and there's a large Mexican-American population there in south Texas.

VASQUEZ: Was there anyone in law school that particularly had an impact on you and your way of thinking, your way of interpreting law, or planning to use the law?

OBLEDO: No, there was no professor that had an impact on me at that school. Some students probably did. There were a couple of them that were very bright persons, very articulate etc. and they used to encourage me.

VASQUEZ: Can you think of the names of [any] of them?

OBLEDO: Smith was one, Arthur Smith.

VASQUEZ: Anybody else?

OBLEDO: Well I can't remember their names now, but there were a couple of others.

VASQUEZ: There too you were involved in political or civic activities, is that right?

OBLEDO: Right.

VASQUEZ: What activities would those have been, and in what groups?

OBLEDO: Well I was involved with the LULAC I was a civil rights officer. So we used to take on some of the people, some of the companies in San Antonio. For instance I recall taking on the City Public Service Board who discriminated, who had no Hispanics working in management. And every one on their labor force, putting up the poles and digging the holes, was Hispanic, and all the supervisors were Anglo. So I went to them to bring the situation to their attention, how unfair this was and the general manager asked me. "What, do you think we all are racist?" I said, "No I don't think you all are racist, but I think there may be some Anglos that might want to be laborers and they can't be because all you do is hire Mexican-Americans as laborers. So now the City's Public Service Board has half Mexican-Americans on its board.

It is a totally different situation now in San Antonio. We also took on the telephone company. They didn't hire Mexican-American operators because they said they had a strong accent. So I told the general manager, "You're telling me then that you wouldn't hire Mrs. Lyndon Johnson

right? Because she has a strong accent you could barely understand her."

He didn't say very much. But I wanted to draw a comparison.

VASQUEZ: So this is while you were a law student?

OBLEDO: Right.

VASQUEZ: What year did you get your degree, in 1960 I guess?

OBLEDO: 1960.

VASQUEZ: Same year as John Kennedy was elected?

OBLEDO: Right.

VASQUEZ: So you were a young man with a law degree, what were you going to do with it?

OBLEDO: Well I was going to try to defend the rights of the people. I was a real idealist; I wanted to help everybody secure their rights. Police, particularly some police officers in San Antonio who were very brutal in our community. But then there was the job discrimination. Like I tell you, there's an institution in San Antonio called Luby's Cafeteria. At one time they used to advertise in the newspapers "Anglos only" when advertising for jobs. And indeed they only hired Anglos. So I started a battle with them, telling them they ought to hire Mexican-Americans. We were a good part of the community etc. And now you ought to see it, it's almost all Mexican-Americans.

VASQUEZ: You went into private practice is that right?

OBLEDO: I did, for about a year.

VASQUEZ: Whom did you practice with?

and brownish ground bluish grey green grass and yellowish orange

yellowish green a small area of tall grasses very tall

Charlotte well a few more areas of tall grass - 15300 RAY

about 1000 ft above sea level

Tall grassy area with many tall grasses very tall - 15300 RAY

about 1000 ft above sea level

Charlotte well a few more areas of tall grasses very tall - 15300 RAY

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Charlotte well a few more areas of tall grasses very tall - 15300 RAY

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OBLEDO: A fellow by the name of Frank Suthers, Frank Hill, ...Mayo Galindo.

VASQUEZ: What's the first name?

OBLEDO: Mayo, M-A-Y-O.

VASQUEZ: Yes. Galindo.

OBLEDO: Yes.

VASQUEZ: What kind of law did you [practice]?

OBLEDO: It was general practice of law. I used to handle all kinds of cases; accidents, divorces, wills, whatever.

VASQUEZ: And then how long would that last?

OBLEDO: About a year.

VASQUEZ: And then?

OBLEDO: Then I went to the Attorney General's office in Texas, in Austin Texas.

VASQUEZ: This was what, 1965, is that right?

OBLEDO: Right.

VASQUEZ: 1965. How did that assignment, or how did that appointment, come about?

OBLEDO: Well, I knew the sheriff in San Antonio pretty well. He really liked me. In fact he told me that he felt like I was his son. And he recommended me to the Attorney General for a job. So I got the job.

VASQUEZ: And what did you do there, what was your duty there?

OBLEDO: I was in the tax division. Filing lawsuits for delinquent taxes etc. and then I dealt a little bit with insurance. So it was a learning process for me.

VASQUEZ: And how long were you there?

OBLEDO: I was there until 1968.

which O my - I just don't know how to start writing to you. A - 1003.180

about last night - 1003.180

O-2000-1003.180

about last night - 1003.180

A - 1003.180

(continues) now I have to write again - 1003.180

now to start off all of this I will be talking, talking now about 1003.180

about all the things that you wanted - 1003.180

about all the things that you wanted - 1003.180

O-2000-1003.180

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/ now I want to talk about the things that you wanted - 1003.180

about all the things that you wanted - 1003.180

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VASQUEZ: Tell me, what it was like in the mid-nineteen sixties, being a Mexican-American attorney in Texas, in the Attorney General's office.

OBLEDO: Well, the Attorney General's office was a good place to work. Actually there were about five of us there, out of a total of about sixty. The Attorney General was a very kind person, very sensitive, so I got to travel throughout the state on these cases. So I learned a lot, grew a lot, and learned a lot about the state of Texas at the same time.

VASQUEZ: What is it that you did, or were doing, that brought you to the attention of the people involved with [the] organization of MALDEF (Mexican American Legal Defense Fund).

OBLEDO: Well I knew Pete Tijerina very well, and Pete Tijerina was one of the founders. So Pete approached me to be the General Counsel of MALDEF. And I declined, I said, "Well there's a few other people who can probably do better at General Counsel than I." But he said, "No, I want you." And I asked why and he said, "'Cause I trust you. I know that if you give me your word, that you'll keep it. I know that you will keep in-house secrets, in-house etc." So that is how I became the counsel.

VASUQEZ: Tell me what you know about how the organization got started, before you came on the scene?

OBLEDO: Well Pete Tijerina and a fellow by the name of [?] Padilla and Joe Bernal and a couple of other people...

VASQUEZ: Is this the Joe Bernal who became a [Texas State] senator?

the first time I've seen a good, positive response from our customers since we started back in 1987 - 1233087

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limits of 100,000 customers, which means that our growth opportunities

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in our financial performance over the next few years. We have had a hard

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in recent months, and we are looking forward to continuing our success.

We are also excited about the new opportunities that are available

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is well positioned to take advantage of the new opportunities and the new market share.

With the new technology and the new market share, Bell - 1233092

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With the new technology and the new market share, Bell - 1233095

is well positioned to take advantage of the new opportunities and the new market share.

With the new technology and the new market share, Bell - 1233096

OBLEDO: Yes sir. Pete Tijerina was trying a case south of San Antonio and he looked at the jury pool and they were all Anglos. So that's what drew his concern about the problem. And he approached the N.A.A.C.P. Legal Defense Fund which was headed by Jack Lindhugh. And he had told him about the situation and they recommended that they file for a grant through the Ford Foundation. So we did, and we got it.

VASQUEZ: It was a 2.2 million dollar grant, given to MALDEF. And the idea was for five years, is that correct?

OBLEDO: That's correct.

VASQUEZ: To begin to do...

OBLEDO: Civil rights work.

VASQUEZ: Civil rights work, in a very general phrasing of the work. What did you understand that to mean?

OBLEDO: Well, fighting discrimination in the areas of education and jobs and police brutality cases etc. Everywhere where we did not receive equal treatment.

VASQUEZ: The atmosphere of the time, I would imagine had something to do with the direction that you took, right? I'm saying there was a Civil Rights movement going all over the country.

OBLEDO: Oh yes.

VASQUEZ: A lot of activism, a lot of anti-war activism, was beginning. Do you think that had something to do with some of the success that you had?

OBLEDO: Well no question about it. In many cases discrimination was so obvious, that it was like picking apples off a tree. We'd file law suites and we'd win

all this country, and to drive away a great day without any rest - 1000.100

and will take about all night. We will not be long, you will be back

about 7 A.M. And because we have nothing else to do

and have had no tea, breakfast will be taken very late first candle

morning will be tea and breakfast will be eaten at 10 A.M.

It is a fine place, but I will not go there again

so soon and my last 1000.100 will be driving from which is like CANNON - 1000.100

Then about 1000.100

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them, right off the bat. For instance there was a public swimming pool in Marlin, Texas.

VASQUEZ: Morgan?

OBLEDO: Marlin, M-A-R-L-I-N. I went up there and I tried to swim and they wouldn't let me swim. It was a public swimming pool. One of the local judges sat on the swimming pool committee. So I went to him and I said "Well how could you be on that committee? When you took the oath of office, upholding the Constitution of the United States? And yet you all discriminate. You don't let Blacks or Hispanics in your pool!" And he said, "Well I didn't know this was going on." "Well it is going on." They decided not to open the pool up to minorities. So we went to court and won that case hands down. So we de-segregated that pool. But I mean so many of the cases were so open and obvious, that they were easy to win.

VASQUEZ: As specific as you can remember, what did you think you were going to be able to accomplish, as general counsel of MALDEF?

OBLEDO: Well, I thought since I was an idealist, we could change the scheme of things in the United States, get rid of discrimination, so to speak, in all these areas of concern. Give our people more opportunity and a better life as a result thereof. But the problems are still here; a lot of the problems are still here. Who can figure out human behavior and the way people act sometimes? It's indescribable!

VASQUEZ: Let me read to you from an autobiographical statement that you wrote. I found it in your papers and tell me if this sort of ran into some of the

[Begin Tape 1] idealism that you're talking about? You say "My responsibilities to the thirty-five member board of directors comprised of renowned lawyers, law professors, law school deans....

VASQUEZ: [End Tape 1, Side A]

ORRICO: I think I did not I stated in those responsibilities, rather well, I

thought I had a good understanding of

VASQUEZ: So you were familiar with the Director of the program, and the

and of each person who you will have to fight, so long as each
will always remain to be your opponent. In this situation nothing
is more likely than victory.

(P. 102, L. 14-17 line 2)

[Begin Tape 1, Side B]

VASQUEZ: ...and distinguished public and private citizens included: Analysis, interpretation of pertinent federal and state legislation applicable to MALDEF; development of recommendations relative to organization policy and posture; conceptualization of problems and needs of client community; initiation of plan and procedures in program development; establishment of litigation priorities; preparation and submission of program and funding proposals to perspective donors such as business corporations and foundations; preparation of annual budget; assuring compliance with funding agencies; policies and regulations and conditions; development and training of staff; execution of all facets of personal management, including appointment and termination; preparation; planning and program manual; personnel policy; bylaws; annual reports and board of staff structures and relationships; execution of contracts; development and maintenance of public relations; and community identity campaign." Did that cut into the idealism of doing a lot of litigation?

OBELDO: No it did not. I carried on those responsibilities rather well, I thought. But I still litigated a lot.

VASQUEZ: So [you were] Executive Director and then you were the General

Counsel, is that the way it was?

OBLEDO: Right, except that in 1970, because of the all cases we were bringing in to Texas, a lot of the so-called "power structure" in the state of Texas, including San Antonio, brought pressure to the Ford Foundation, and the Ford Foundation came to us and said, "Look we are going to have to do something, we do not want to shut you down, but why don't you all move the national office elsewhere, out of San Antonio, out of Texas, so that we can keep funding you." "Otherwise we won't be able to fund you anymore." So we decided to move the office to San Francisco and Pete Tijerina, who was the executive director, didn't care to move from San Antonio. So I was appointed President and the General Counsel. So in effect, I became the Executive Director.

VASQUEZ: Can you tell me more specific... who or what elements in that so-called power structure could wield so much power in New York City, say at the Ford Foundation?

OBELDO: Well there was the Mayor of San Antonio and a certain Mr. McAlister and all the prominent people in businesses in San Antonio who were mostly Anglos, all Anglos, brought pressure on the Ford Foundation. In fact, they started putting out bumper stickers. People were under the misconception that the Ford Foundation was funded by the Ford Motor Company, and it is not.

But anyway, they put out bumper stickers, "Support Hate, Buy a Ford"

VASQUEZ: Oh really?

OBLEDO: Yes.

VASQUEZ: Did you ever save one of those?

OBLEDO: Oh yes.

VASQUEZ: Is there one in your papers?

OBLEDO: There [is] someplace

VASQUEZ: So how did that go again?

OBLEDO: "Support Hate, Buy a Ford"

VASQUEZ: Before we get to the move to San Francisco, I'm interested in the experiences that you had setting up field offices in the other parts of the United States. I'm particularly interested in my home state of New Mexico. But tell me what you can about the other set of offices, in the other parts of the country.

OBLEDO: Well we surveyed the country and found out where there was more activity than anywhere else. We started off by looking up an office in Los Angeles. There was our first office. And then from there we proceeded to Chicago, and then finally we thought we'd have an office in Washington D.C. because of the government there and the Capitol and all the politicians there, and that's what we did. And in Los Angeles there was a lot of activity. There were a lot of groups

"The first, after the second," which happened on the first morning of

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"The first, after the second," which happened on the first morning of

the 27th

in the barrio, a lot of newspapers being printed. I think almost a hundred of them. So we decided not to locate the office in Los Angeles because everybody would be coming to our offices and we would never get to do very much.

VASQUEZ: You would never get out of Los Angeles?

OBLEDO: Right, so that's why we decided on San Francisco.

VASQUEZ: Ok, the term "neutral" is used in the history of MALDEF, as far as a neutral territory. What were your experiences in Colorado?

OBLEDO: In Colorado I worked with Rocky [Rodolfo "Corky"] Gonzalez, and similar groups in Denver.

VASQUEZ: Corky, you mean?

OBLEDO: Corky Gonzalez. And [other] groups in Denver on, discrimination etc., cases – school cases.

VASQUEZ: Did the more established Mexican-American attorneys help out in these [cases]?

OBLEDO: Well yes, in Colorado they did, yes.

VASQUEZ: How about in New Mexico?

OBLEDO: Well [State Representative] Raymond Sanchez, he was the Speaker...

VASQUEZ: Speaker of the House, right?

OBLEDO: Yes, he was involved with us, and [Senator Manny] Aragon in the Senate...

to receive John T. Lewis in order to give him time to make arrangements
and provide transportation and lodgings for Mr. Lewis to lecture.

See his written statement at Major Wadsworth's office.

John T. Lewis is a man of strong character.

He has been a member of the New England Anti-Slavery Society.

He has been a member of the Boston Anti-Slavery Society.

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He has been a member of the Boston Anti-Slavery Society.

ASSEMBLY

- VASQUEZ:** Manny Aragon?
- OBLEDO:** Yes, he was very much involved with us,...
- VASQUEZ:** What about Graciela Olivares?
- OBLEDO:** Graciela Olivares, she was a member of the board, very active, very articulate. There was a fellow from the Albuquerque area, a very well known lawyer in Albuquerque, I forget his last name now, he was very much involved with us.
- VASQUEZ:** Did you get any opposition by the more established Hispanic groups there?
- OBLEDO:** No.
- VASQUEZ:** Nowhere? Did you pretty much get support [from everyone]?
- OBLEDO:** Not that I recall.
- VASQUEZ:** Why was an office maintained there only until 1976. Why did that close down, do you know?
- OBLEDO:** Where is that?
- VASQUEZ:** In Albuquerque.
- OBLEDO:** I didn't know they had a regional office in Albuquerque; they must have opened it way after I left.
- VASQUEZ:** After you left, tell me what you think [you accomplished] in the five years you were with MALDEF, what were the most important victories?
- OBLEDO:** Well, we had some school discrimination, school segregation cases

Thank you

for your kind words. I am very grateful for your support and encouragement. I am sorry that I have not been able to respond earlier. I have been very busy with my work and family responsibilities. I will try to catch up with you soon.

I am sorry for any inconvenience caused by my absence. I hope you understand my situation. I will be back as soon as possible. Thank you again for your support and understanding.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

in El Paso, in San Antonio, and elsewhere around the country. We had some draft cases. That was during the Viet Nam war. Young people were being drafted, and they felt that the Mexican-Americans were being discriminated against, and we had some job cases against big corporations [like] Bank of America. So I think we did a lot of good.

VASQUEZ: Some observers claim that Serna vs. Portales Board of Education ¹, on municipal schools I guess, was a critical case, why?

OBLEDO: Because it sort have equalized the educational opportunities for Hispanics in New Mexico.

VASQUEZ: This was a case in which, it was argued that so long as no bilingual or bicultural education was afforded people of another culture or who predominantly spoke another language, that they would be held of a disadvantage...

OBLEDO: Right, they would be deprived.

VASQUEZ: And this opened up a lot of terrain, and probably even affected cases later on like Lau vs. Nichols ². Is that right?

OBLEDO: Yes, that's right.

VASQUEZ: I guess what I'm trying to lead up to, is that in the last two or three years in New Mexico, a group of parents, including Hispanics, have

¹ (1974) Serna et, al. v. Portales Municipal Schools, et al, vs. District Court of New Mexico, No. 8994

² (1974) Lau et al. v. Nichols et al. Certiorari to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, No. 72-6520

sued the Albuquerque Public Schools to do away with bilingual education, and two sisters who taught Chicano Studies, or Chicano History in Vaughn, New Mexico were fired and it became kind of a "cause célèbre". It seems like we've gone full circle. Do you feel that way?

OBLEDO: Yes, sometimes I do.

VASQUEZ: Is it demoralizing to you sometimes?

OBLEDO: You know we fought a lot of cases [against] segregation because the Mexicans were sent to one particular school etc. Not too long ago I advocated that we ought to have a separate school system. Have Hispanic schools, with teachers, and the professors, etc. We wouldn't have to compete against anybody else, but ourselves, and then we would graduate people to go to colleges, etc. So I think we've gone full circle.

VASQUEZ: What kind of response did you get to that, sort of "separatist" notion?

OBLEDO: Well we really didn't get a response to it, no. I sure didn't.

VASQUEZ: In what areas do you think MALDEF made the most gains in those five years that you were there?

OBLEDO: I think in education.

VASQUEZ: In education?

OBLEDO: Yes.

- VASQUEZ:** But you also took on draft cases.
- OBLEDO:** Oh yes.
- VASQUEZ:** And you also took on police brutality cases.
- OBLEDO:** Right.
- VASQUEZ:** And you took on voting cases.
- OBLEDO:** Yes.
- VASQUEZ:** You challenged jury selection.
- OBLEDO:** Right.
- VASQUEZ:** In fact, when one reads the initial report, that you submitted on the activities of MALDEF right before you left, I stopped Xeroxing the list of 60 some-cases, over 50 cases. Was that a caseload that was realistic?
- OBLEDO:** Yes, it was. Actually we could have taken on a lot more cases, but we were pretty slow at what we did. Yes, we wanted to win. And the.... (Inaudible), in other words we wanted somebody who had a complaint and used it, we had a legitimate complaint. And then we could do something about it.
- VASQUEZ:** So you would pick cases that you thought that you had a good chance of winning?
- OBLEDO:** Right. We had a police brutality case that we won't forget in Lubbock, Texas where this young person had been arrested and taken to jail, and his arm had been broken, and the policeman said,

that he was trying to be pulled away from the bars and he was hanging on the bars and his arm got broken. We proved that there was no way that the fracture had to be... had to have had his arm behind him and pulled up to cause that kind of fracture. So we won that case, on police brutality.

VASQUEZ: Employment discrimination. What sticks out in your mind that is a victory that you think went on to be substantial, maybe even precedent-setting?

OBLEDO: Well the Public Utility Service Company was one.

VASQUEZ: In Texas, right?

OBLEDO: The General Telephone Company was another.

VASQUEZ: Did you get criticism, or opposition, by more conservative elements of the community when you started defending people like Rosalio Muñoz, or some of the other people that dodged, that opposed the draft?

OBLEDO: Sure, yes. There was a lot of criticism. [But] we were doing the right thing.

VASQUEZ: That was your response?

OBLEDO: Right.

VASQUEZ: Did you ever get, complaints that you were too, too "activist," too "radical?"

OBLEDO: Yes, I got those complaints all my life.

VASQUEZ: Let me read you something and I want you to have an opportunity to address. When one goes to Stanford University to go through the MALDEF papers. There is a summary of what all the papers hold, and it runs twenty-some pages. But on page nineteen of that summary, it gets to 1973 and it says the following, "In 1973 Obledo resigned, in part because of negative rulings that MALDEF received on important litigation under his leadership, the board then hired Vilma Martinez to replace Obledo and..." Then it goes on talking about Martinez's background. Is that a fair or unfair assessment?

OBLEDO: I think it's an unfair assessment. I'd like for them to point out what bad rulings we got...

VASQUEZ: That's what led me to, to look at the cases, but your feeling is that, this is a poor reading of the record.

OBLEDO: I think so.

VASQUEZ: Anything else more that you want to say about that, or put on the record?

OBLEDO: No, I'd been in MALDEF five years already, I thought that it was time to move on.

VASQUEZ: Why?

OBLEDO: Well because, I'd gotten an offer to teach at the Harvard Law School at that time. I'd met the dean. As you probably know,

Spurred by a desire to see how their performance had changed

MONDAY

and by a desire to get a better feel for what was going on at the plant

and seeing all the work the maintenance crew was doing

and to get an impression of the way the plant was operating

about 2000 ft below the surface of the water, the divers

were able to get a good idea of what was going on

and how well maintenance had been done in the right areas

and to get an idea of what could be done to make things

even better. The divers were also able to get a good idea

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MALDEF had a scholarship program. We helped young people go to law school. As a result of that scholarship which I administered, I'd gotten to know most of the deans around the country. And I got to become good friends with the dean at the Harvard Law School.

VASQUEZ: What was his name?

OBLEDO: Al Sachs

VASQUEZ: S-A-C-H-S?

OBLEDO: S-A-C-K-S. So he offered me a job at Harvard.

VASQUEZ: What kind of appointment was that?

OBLEDO: That was an appointment to the faculty teaching the introduction to constitutional law.

VASQUEZ: Was that a tenure track or a two-year appointment?

OBLEDO: No, it was tenured.

VASQUEZ: Lets go on. But I want to come back to this question of MALDEF later. When one reads the record of the transition, you refer to your years as the "dramatic years," in one of the MALDEF newsletters, in fact, in a speech that you gave. You called them the, "Dramatic years that will stay with me for rest of my life." And then when one reads the speech of the incoming general council, Vilma Martinez, and the language that she uses there is [the statement] that MALDEF has got to stop, and I'm paraphrasing now, trying to be everything to everybody, and begin to focus, narrow its focus and

the slopes, giving birth to a 27-month-old child who was 33 cm

longer than I had expected and in the end developed at

my hands, although I am not used to working with

babies and I am not used to the physical exertion of

holding one still

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concentrate on raising funds from corporations, and two or three other things, "We need to focus on education and job discrimination." Was there a change there?

OBLEDO: Yes there was a change...

VASQUEZ: When...

OBLEDO: When I was the General Counsel, I used to try to serve everybody. For instance to Corky Gonzalez's group [Crusade for Justice], César Chávez. We were house counsel for those kinds of groups, we dealt a lot with street people, like community groups in Los Angeles, there [were] quite a few of them. So Vilma thought it took a lot of time and a lot of effort, and they weren't Hispanic. But I thought it was highly important to the Hispanic community.

VASQUEZ: There also is a phrase in that 1974 report which talks about

"Choosing a leadership that could better deal with," what they called, "... the wave of conservatism and backlash." This was with the election, and I guess we begin to get a more conservative a backlash being articulated. Do you think that was part of the strategy of MALDEF, do you think that was part of the change?

OBLEDO: I think it was.

VASQUEZ: Now that you look back on it, twenty-some years later, was it a wise decision for them to do that?

OBLEDO: Well you got to know the situation. We needed money to operate,

so [we] catered to corporations to help raise that money. And yet some of those corporations were our worst enemies. So you can't really bite the hand that feeds you, so you get into that situation, because of the funding. The funding priority tended to lessen our activities as activists. So that's what happens, and I find that very regrettable.

VASQUEZ: I know that when you were there you had [a case against] International Telephone and Telegraph Company, you were after some of the oil companies, and that pretty much stopped after you left, is that right?

OBLEDO: I think so.

VASQUEZ: You think that's the cost of doing business?

OBLEDO: Well, apparently it is.

VASQUEZ: How do you think that affects a civil rights organization?

OBLEDO: Well, it affects it greatly, in a very negative sense. I've always been wishful that we could raise the money from our own community, that the Hispanics underwrite their civil rights organizations. That [way] we wouldn't have to have any allegiance to corporations or foundations or anybody else. We'd really be independent to do things that are in the best interest of our community. But so far, that hasn't come about.

VASQUEZ: You took a position at Harvard. I know it was a short tenure as a

The last option for a general and specific strategy is to
interact with customers to determine their needs and wants.

Individuals can then be segmented based on age and other

variables including gender, geographic area, and life stages.

For individuals from different households, interactions with the

customer can be used to determine their needs and wants.

The customer can then be assigned to a specific household

and the individual can be assigned to a specific segment.

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and the individual may be assigned to a specific segment.

professor. But I looked at the pictures of you and your classmates, and I read some of the correspondence of that period. It seems like it had a great impact on you, is that true?

OBLEDO: Yes it did.

VASQUEZ: In what way?

OBLEDO: Well, first you get the feeling, for whatever reason, that if you're at Harvard, you are a superior human being. I mean you mention the word Harvard anywhere, and it opens doors for you. Instead of going to Long Beach State College or Sacramento State, or anything like that. So I felt that I was there, I was one of the first Raza there, and I was able to inspire students. We had a number of Chicanos there, and the number was growing...very bright young people.

VASQUEZ: Does anybody come to mind that was there at that time? Hispanics that went on to, to practice law?

OBLEDO: Norma Cantú. Who was active at MALDEF, I think she heads the civil rights division in the [U.S.] Department of Education right now. Carlos Alcalá, a lawyer here in Sacramento.

VASQUEZ: What did you teach at Harvard?

OBLEDO: Introduction to Constitutional Law.

VASQUEZ: What did it do for you?

OBLEDO: Well it taught me some broader law. I learned a lot when I was

After much hunting I may have finally got it but I still don't know exactly what it is.

With some of the day's finds I went to the shop to get them

cleaned and polished. They will be great for a display at home.

After a short time I was back home again with my finds.

Then I had to go to the shop to get them cleaned and polished.

When I got home I had to clean up the house and wash the clothes.

It was a long day but I enjoyed myself and I am very happy with my finds.

The next day I went to the shop to get my finds cleaned and

polished. I am very happy with my finds and I am very happy with the day I had.

After a short time I was back home again with my finds.

Then I had to go to the shop to get them cleaned and polished.

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there. I learned a lot from the students, who were very bright. I couldn't believe they knew so much. So they made me study as well.

VASQUEZ: So it made you, that much sharper, right?

OBLEDO: Right.

VASQUEZ: What was your most memorable experience during your period at Harvard?

OBLEDO: At Harvard? Well it had nothing to do with the law really. I got to know the people at the cafeteria, at the lunchroom, and they brought me a big bottle of Tabasco, and I'd sit at the lunchroom and all the professors used to read the *Wall Street Journal*. I would take the dean the *Daily News* or something like that, just to get him disturbed. So that's about all I remember.

VASQUEZ: What good did being at Harvard do you?

OBLEDO: Well, it gives you a lot of self-confidence for one thing. I think that's the most that can be said for it. If you're there, then you feel that you can conquer the world.

VASQUEZ: And it did that for you, even though you weren't a student, as a young professor?

OBLEDO: Yes. It did.

VASQUEZ: I don't want to get into this today, but I'd like to put on the record. How did you come to the attention of Governor [Edmund] Jerry

Brown Jr.?

OBLEDO: Well, through some friends of mine. When I was working with MALDEF in California, I established a relationship with some very important lawyers, who were friends of Jerry Brown. So when Jerry Brown was elected they mentioned my name to him, and recommended me for a job, that's how...

VASQUEZ: Who were some of these people?

OBLEDO: Anthony Kline, who is a judge in San Francisco now, Robert Gnaizda, who works for the Greenling Institute in San Francisco. There were a couple of others.

VASQUEZ: So it wasn't necessarily that you were so amazed by or ideologically connected to Jerry Brown...

OBLEDO: No I wasn't.

VASQUEZ: ...that made him make that choice. What did you think when you got that offer?

OBLEDO: Well I didn't know whether to take it or not, because I did like Harvard. I spoke to the dean and the dean told me, "Go ahead and take it, and if you don't like it, come back."

VASQUEZ: So you had an open-door policy to come back, right?

OBLEDO: Right.

VASQUEZ: And what was the most daunting part of this job, as you first looked at it?

OBLEDO: Well I remember speaking with the Governor and I had looked at the schematic chart of the Health and Welfare Agency. I told the governor, I said, "Governor I've never run an agency like that, it's just so big and has got so many employees and a great big budget, etc." He said, "I've never been Governor before, but I'm going to be," so I took the job.

VASQUEZ: Did you like him when you first met him?

OBLEDO: Yes.

VASQUEZ: Right away?

OBLEDO: Yes.

VASQUEZ: What did you like about him?

OBLEDO: Well he was young, very idealistic, a liberal, progressive, ...he was very supportive of whatever I did.

VASQUEZ: What kind of advice did you get from your colleagues in MALDEF and other organizations, L.U.L.A.C and other organizations you had been in when this offer came?

OBLEDO: None really. They were all elated because I was the first Mexican-American, or Hispanic to be appointed to the cabinet in the state...

VASQUEZ: Of California.

OBLEDO: ...so everybody just went with it, I mean due to having [inaudible], they were elated.

VASQUEZ: In California as well?

In instant had I been suddenly struck by something unfamiliar. Now 1000.100

at first I could hardly tell what it was but

in a few moments I began to get it. It was now I saw that

she had just come from a walk in the country and had just

had a good time with David when she had left him.

She will come to see me

again next week and will stay

for a week or two days.

She will be here Saturday evening

and Sunday morning.

I am very glad to have her

here this weekend but I am

very sorry to see her go again.

She will be here Saturday evening

and Sunday morning.

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and Sunday morning.

OBLEDO: Yes, they had a lot of receptions for me. They couldn't believe that I had been appointed. So I got a lot of demands from our community because I was Hispanic.

VASQUEZ: Did those help you or hinder you?

OBLEDO: I tried to help them in any situation that I could.

VASQUEZ: But did it help you to have that kind of a base?

OBLEDO: Oh yes.

VASQUEZ: Did it help you do a good job?

OBLEDO: Sure.

VASQUEZ: Lets get more into detail on that discussion on tomorrow's session.

OBLEDO: All right.

VASQUEZ: Is that ok?

OBLEDO: Ok.

and called Pihon - well known to us in old years as the

old road through to Tel Aviv. I call him my dad and I

call him dad and I never call him

my dad or anything else.

Alma Lekha, we're going to have a good time

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[Session 2, July 27, 1999]

[Continue Tape 1, Side B]

VASQUEZ: We are recording the second session of an interview with Mario Obledo in Sacramento, California. It's July 27, 1999 and yesterday we went over a period in your life, that shaped a lot of your public image, but also I think, from the comments that you made yesterday, shaped you as well. Before we go on to other topics, and the next topic would be, your appointment to Health Educational Office Secretary of the state of California. There are other organizations that you have been involved with over the years and they intersect with the period we talked about. Maybe you could talk to us a little bit about those organizations. One is the Southwest Intergroup Relations Council [Inc.], which was organized in 1969. Tell me about that organization, if you will. What its purposes were.

OBLEDO: That organization no longer exists. At the time the objective was to create better human relations between various ethnic and racial groups in America. So we functioned for about five years, or so. We had a good board, Mervyn Dymally, the former lieutenant governor of California and former congressman from California was a member of it. And so [were] a lot of prominent people.

most difficult to obtain information to determine whether any particular individual
is publishing lies (1991, 52, 400-40). Research on communication planning
efficiency has found a typical tactic used by public relations professionals
when they want to influence public perception is to provide facts and statistics
from multiple sources to argue their point. This is done through advertising
and public relations messages. The research has also found that
the more individuals have been exposed to different sources of information
the more difficult it will be for them to change their minds (1991, 52, 400-40).
According to the 1991 study, the most effective way to change people's minds
is to change their attitudes. Communication professionals can do this by giving
information that will affect people's thoughts about a particular issue. For example,
if a company wants to change people's attitudes towards its products, it can do so
by giving information that will affect people's thoughts about the product. This
can be done through advertising, public relations, and other forms of communication.

- VASQUEZ:** Willie [L.] Brown I believe was a member, is that right?
- OBLEDO:** I believe so.
- VASQUEZ:** [Senator] Joe [J.] Bernal?
- OBLEDO:** Joe Bernal.
- VASQUEZ:** Vine Deloria [Jr.]
- OBLEDO:** Right. He's a very noted Indian writer.
- VASQUEZ:** Dr. Ralph Guzman, who's passed away now, but was at [University of California] Santa Cruz at that time.
- OBLEDO:** Yes.
- VASQUEZ:** And it was to, "Promote equality of opportunity for our mutual understanding, respect and cooperation among all people and groups of the Southwest." Was this a sort of an advisory group, did you meet to exchange information, or what was purpose?
- OBLEDO:** No, actually it was not an advisory group, it was a policy making group. We used to try to foster better human relations between various groups. As you know, there is stress between the various ethnic groups, between the Hispanic and the Black, the Black and the Jewish community etc., and we were trying to alleviate those problems.
- VASQUEZ:** How long did that function, 5 years you say?
- OBLEDO:** About 5 years.
- VASQUEZ:** It changed its name at one point, right?

After initial evidence was collected from [redacted] with

[redacted] and [redacted] were interviewed.

[redacted] and [redacted] stated [redacted]

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OBLEDO: Well I think it did, but I don't recall, now.

VASQUEZ: There's another group that you got involved with, I don't know if it was around this time or a little later, and that was the Southwest Voter Registration Project.

OBLEDO: Well that was 1974. When I went back to San Antonio from San Francisco, Willie Velasquez was then the executive director of Southwest Voter, came to try to get a tax-exempt number for the organization. But they had been through a lot trying to get that number. So he brought me the material. It was a stack about three feet high and I was not inclined to go through it. So we decided to change the name of the organization. He filed an application for a tax-exempt number, and we drove that application from San Antonio to Austin to the IRS headquarters. The following day we got a letter rejecting us. So then we appealed it to Washington D.C., and I spoke to the lawyer in Washington D.C., compared the Southwest Voter Registration Project to the voter project in Atlanta, Georgia. So they're identical and yet the Voter Project was tax exempt. So they gave us a letter of tax exemption for the Southwest Voter [Registration] Project. And that's how we got started.

VASQUEZ: Willie Velasquez, was he one of the people that came out of one of the first [groups of] interns in, the early MALDEF years?

OBLEDO: Yes he was. He worked for MALDEF for a while.

VASQUEZ: Did you maintain contact with that organization, in the later years?

OBLEDO: Oh yes I did. Up to this day I still have contact with it. I served on the Board of Directors for some time, but I still communicate with them quite frequently.

VASQUEZ: What do you think is the significance, or has been the significance, of that organization?

OBLEDO: Well, when Southwest Voter Project was founded, I told Willie Velasquez that in my mind [it] was the most important organization in our community, because it was meant to empower people, to get [out] the Hispanic to vote, and to increase our numbers at the voting polls. That has come about slowly; there's been a tremendous change in the Southwest, in California, in Texas, New Mexico and Arizona. Hispanics are voting, they're becoming recognized now, we're getting more powerful, and we have in California the Lieutenant Governor who's a Mexican-American [Cruz Bustamante]. So that says a lot, I mean who would ever dream that in this century we'd have a [lieutenant] governor in the State of California for instance.

VASQUEZ: In addition to a lieutenant governor you also have a Speaker of the Assembly [Antonio Villaraigosa].

OBLEDO: A Speaker of the Assembly.

VASQUEZ: A lot of powerful people in the Senate as well.

Today you will learn how to play with the system you have available.

EXERCISE

Take some time to play around with the system you have available.

GOALS

The goal is to learn how to play with the system you have available.

EXERCISE

Take some time to play around with the system you have available.

EXERCISE

Take some time to play around with the system you have available.

EXERCISE

Take some time to play around with the system you have available.

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EXERCISE

Take some time to play around with the system you have available.

EXERCISE

OBLEDO: Right. So we've come a long way, but we still have some way to go yet. So the Southwest Voter Registration Project is still working very hard to try to register people to vote and to try to get them to the voting places on the day of elections.

VASQUEZ: So [Assembly Speaker] Jess Unruh's [famous] comment that, "Chicanos don't count cause they don't vote." Do you think those days are over?

OBLEDO: Those days are over.

VASQUEZ: There was another organization that you were involved with, or that you were the co-founder of, and that's the Hispanic National Bar Association. What year did that take place and what was your role in it?

OBLEDO: That was in, about 1972, if I recall correctly. A gentleman came to MALDEF proposing that a Mexican-American organization be part of the CLEO Program. But in order to do that we needed a bar association and we didn't have one. So Luís García, Cruz Reynoso, and I founded the La Raza Lawyers Association in San Francisco, around 1972. And we got a tax-exempt number for the organization and became a member of the board of the CLEO organization. CLEO being a federal program, designated to assist attorneys, young attorneys through school and then internships, etc. Later on the name was changed from La Raza Lawyers Association to the

National Hispanic Bar Association. They have an office in Washington D.C. today, are very active, they hold a convention every year, it's a very sophisticated event, they have judges and, prominent lawyers come to speak to the association, so it's become quite an institution.

VASQUEZ: Inaudible [tape garbled]

OBLEDO: Inaudible [tape garbled]

[End Tape 1, Side B]

the novel will conclude with another
statement like this one, when D. G. says that
he might consider some information you'd just given
him about his wife, who dying of cancer, was buried
in a cemetery in which he had been a
volunteer to help
digging and digging
(digging and digging) SUNDAY
2000 hrs
(D. G. says I have)

[Begin Tape 2, Side A]

VASQUEZ: And its contribution has been what, to expand...?

OBLEDO: Its contribution has been to educate Hispanic Lawyers, to get them involved in bar activities, to try to give them more opportunity in the legal profession.

VASQUEZ: Let me ask you a question that maybe out of sequence, but it may be timely to ask it now, I remember during the Carter administration and I was looking through your record in your papers. You, among other people, very assertively were saying "President Carter, its time to have a Hispanic on the Supreme Court," and yet that hasn't taken place. Why do you think that is?

OBLEDO: Well it's been a lack of political power yet. But we are organizing and the National Hispanic Bar Association has been in communication with the [President William J.] Clinton Administration, to appoint a Hispanic as the next Supreme Court justice. Eventually we will get one I'm sure. It's just a matter of time.

VASQUEZ: Does it make sense to you that [organizations] like the Hispanic National Bar Association would be one of the "point" organizations in bringing that about?

OBLEDO: That's right, they are lobbying for it now.

VASQUEZ: Do you suppose the National Council of La Raza would also be involved in something like that?

OBLEDO: Well I would hope so. Because the Council of the La Raza is a very prominent advocacy group and I think they would have a lot of influence on the appointment of a judge to the Supreme Court.

the following snippet of code, simply replacing `zope` with your own path to the ZopeT object:

```
from ZopeT import ZopeT
zope = ZopeT()
zope.setObject('myobject', 'My Object')
zope.publish('myobject')
```

The above code will publish the object at `/myobject`. If you want to publish it under a different URL, such as `/myobject/myname`, you can do so by changing the `publish` line to:

```
zope.publish('myobject', 'myname')
```

If you want to publish multiple objects, you can do so by publishing them all at once:

```
zope.publish('myobject', 'myname')
zope.publish('myotherobject', 'myothername')
```

Finally, if you want to publish an entire folder, you can do so by publishing its `index.html` page:

```
zope.publish('myfolder', 'index.html')
```

That's it! You now have a published ZopeT object.

Using ZopeT with Plone

Plone is built on top of Zope, so you can use ZopeT to publish Plone objects. For example, if you want to publish a Plone content item, you can do so by publishing its `index.html` page:

```
zope.publish('mycontentitem', 'index.html')
```

That's it! You now have a published Plone content item.

Using ZopeT with Archetypes

Archetypes is another Zope-based content type system, and you can use ZopeT to publish Archetypes objects. For example, if you want to publish an Archetypes content item, you can do so by publishing its `index.html` page:

```
zope.publish('myarchetypeitem', 'index.html')
```

That's it! You now have a published Archetypes content item.

VASQUEZ: Let's get back to the mid '70s. Because these overlap, I want to get you to comment on some of these organizations. But lets get back to the mid '70s. You left MALDEF, [you'd] gone to Harvard and, I guess, you taught there for what – eight months?

OBLEDO: About eight months.

VASQUEZ: And then your name was brought to the attention of newly elected [California] Governor Brown by Anthony Klein and people like that. And you were appointed Health & Welfare Secretary in 1975 right? Tell me what was the atmosphere was. If I may set a little bit of a context: its post-Watergate. Watergate has not been too long in [happening]; things in Vietnam are clearly not going well for the United States and in May of 1975, we see our ambassador leaving the U.S. embassy in Saigon – on a helicopter – off the roof [of the Embassy]. There is a movement here in California that people have identified, not so much as a tax reform movement, but an anti-politician movement, called Proposition 13, which is to affect the tax base that's available for social programs. It is a context in which you come into this position with a budget that, eventually by the time you leave, reaches 15 billion dollars. Probably the largest agency, it is the largest agency in state government.

OBLEDO: Yes it is.

VASQUEZ: It has a larger budget [than] most states in the United States and many other countries in the world.

OBLEDO: That's right.

at very top of River Lagan in south Belfast 10.10' from which about one-third 1.000,000 cu yds of sand were taken and used for making sandstone

and other stone buildings along Lagan frontage of city. It cost 125,000 £ and

was a great success and was followed by a number of similar schemes.

At same time another 1,000,000 cu yds

(second) lease given to another firm of Belfast to help them out back 10.10' below

frontage above one-third, which will amount total 2,000,000 cu yds of sandstone.

Very considerable extra cost, but do it right first and nothing will go wrong.

And good job can be done if properly planned and executed.

So far I am not having trouble with quality of sandstone (I mean) as that

is question of 10 and 100 feet below frontage of 10.10' back to back.

Improving a sand quarry and getting up a large quantity of sandstone

material and a good deal of time has been spent in getting rid of old sand

and debris or waste rock. This latter treatment has been carried out successfully

and removed with a great deal of difficulty.

Now we have got rid of all old sand and debris and are getting on with

the new sand which is being taken out at 10.10' back to back.

It is a good deal of work, but we are getting on well and

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VASQUEZ: You are the first Latino or Hispanic to come into the Cabinet of the California Executive, at least in this century. Tell me what the context was, from your point of view.

OBLEDO: Well you have described the situation correctly. All those events were occurring. But it really had no impact on state government, except for Proposition 13, which cut the tax base for state government. But Governor Jerry Brown was a progressive; he was a liberal, he believed in social programs, so that our budget was never cut in the Health and Welfare Agency. In fact, it was supplemented and he supported all the activities I was involved in promoting equality of opportunity, an increase in social programs for the elderly and for the children for the state of California. So, it was a very heavy, if you will, time in my life when I was doing a lot of things that I had always wanted to do and I felt government had a role in those kind of activities.

VASQUEZ: [Did] you, at that point, consider yourself a New Deal liberal?

OBLEDO: Yes I did. I have been an admirer of [President] Franklin [D.] Roosevelt all of my life.

VASQUEZ: So it makes sense that you [would] think government's role was to help people to be involved....

OBLEDO: That's correct, to solve problems for people.

VASQUEZ: And of course the tenor of the times was going the other way. It was going more to the Right. For example, the prison policy was moving away from reform, to punishment.

planned and the teacher will have some time available to make a visit before 2017 - 00000007

visiting schools with new teachers and students. No T-positions will be issued to international

students until after the first year of their studies at the university.

Information about grants from USA, international foundations, foundations and other institutions

is available on the website of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation.

The website contains information on grants for research, teaching, postgraduate studies, scientific work

and other activities of students and postgraduates, as well as information on grants for the development

of scientific and educational institutions, foundations and non-governmental organizations.

The website also contains information on grants for the development of scientific and educational

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non-governmental organizations, foundations and non-governmental organizations.

OBLEDO: But I had the prisons under my jurisdiction and I lowered the inmate population from about, I can't really recall the exact figures, but I think there were about thirty five thousand inmates in the prisons and I brought it down to about ten thousand. The correction officers got very concerned about that, because of their jobs. So they brought pressure on the legislature, and the prisons were taken away from me, and a different agency was created for the prisons. But I thought we were doing very [well] in that regard.

VASQUEZ: At one point, there was a two-year period in which the percentage of the minority population in prisons went from forty eight percent to fifty four percent and you made some very poignant statements about that. Do you think that contributed to the prisons being taken away from your jurisdiction?

OBLEDO: Oh yes, I was a little controversial about that. So there was pressure brought on the legislature to take the prisons away from me, particularly, by the correctional officers association. They were leery that the populations was going to dwindle down to almost nothing, and that they would be out of work. So that is what happened.

VASQUEZ: Wasn't it also the case that some politicians would be out of work if they didn't have prisoners and criminals to rail against?

OBLEDO: Probably so. There were some legislators involved in that movement.

VASQUEZ: Was George Deukmejian involved in that?

OBLEDO: I don't recall.

VASQUEZ: He was the Attorney General then, I think.

OBLEDO: Right.

refueling aircraft left between 1 hour and 1.5 hours which you had 1.100 - 1.000.000

hours more which didn't had enough time off between them 1.200 hours

the tanks to work a segment I have written off no external loadouts will switch

to fuel to external fuel tanks because you are using the external loadouts and I know

you have more tanks off has been added and for switching between them off using

external tank switching off loadouts and I have written the last part with

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the tanks to work a segment I have written off no external loadouts will switch

to fuel to external fuel tanks because you are using the external loadouts and I know

VASQUEZ: Before we go on to other things, since we are on this topic. One of the main criticisms leveled against you was that you were "soft on crime" and as a result of an article in the *Readers Digest*, it was intimated that you might be connected to the Mexican Mafia, or other criminal gangs in the state of California. Talk to me about that.

OBLEDO: Well that's a long story. Actually there was no truth to the article. But what happened was that my office used to clear some grants to community organizations, quite a number of grants in fact. I didn't directly see them or pass over them. Some of my staff people did. And that person had approved a grant to a community organization in Los Angeles that was later found out to be controlled by the Mexican Mafia. And that was the connection.

VASQUEZ: [Inaudible]

OBLEDO: Yes I think so, that was the connection. They tied me in and they said, "You should look over every grant," but it was impossible for me to do that because there was a large number of them. And I had so many other duties to perform. But that is what happened in that case.

VASQUEZ: And then you were even brought in to court, subpoenaed to court, when Michael Delia was accused of killing his wife, who was willing to testify that there was a lot of gang activities involved in some of the agencies.

OBLEDO: The story was that she came to Sacramento to see me to tell me about the story. And it was on her way to my office that she was picked up and murdered. So that was the connection there. But I never met Delia, if that was his name.

VASQUEZ: You never met him?

... when left to itself, would have been an acute agonist, rather than being an ally. - 0003.000

"In this case the "opposite force" does not tell how your feelings before consideration of becoming an object may yet become more or less intense, or whether they will increase or decrease. The only rule in such cases is that you must consider the whole situation, and then decide what to do." - 0003.000

"... if you are in a position of having to make a decision, it is better to have had a long period of time in which to consider the problem, than to have to make a decision in a short time. This is because you will have had more time to think over all the factors involved, and to make a more careful examination of the situation, and to have had more time to consider the consequences of your action. - 0003.000

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OBLEDO: I never met him or spoke to him. I never knew him.

VASQUEZ: So you think it was mostly a fabricated charge?

OBLEDO: Well it all happened around the same time of the lowering of the population in the prisons, the community grant of Los Angeles, the murder of this lady who was supposedly had information on the Mafia control in a lot of the institutions. That's when all the events came together, so to speak.

VASQUEZ: Did you visit the prisons?

OBLEDO: Oh yes, quite frequently. I went to all the prisons.

VASQUEZ: What was your assessment of conditions [in] the prisons?

OBLEDO: Well I found them to be adequately staffed and I found the food to be rather good. I found the conditions to be rather safe for the prisoners.

VASQUEZ: You [got] a lot of requests for assistance from different high-profile prisoners like Hugo Pineda, for instance...

OBLEDO: Right.

VASQUEZ: And you [took] it upon yourself to try to do something to alleviate their situation.

OBLEDO: Right.

VASQUEZ: You didn't see that as a conflict with the position that you held?

OBLEDO: Not really. No, because I felt that it was my duty to try to help human beings in the best way I could. And I always looked at him as a human being.

VASQUEZ: So it goes back to your early attitude, when you were in MALDEF, you helped everybody, irrespective. There was another incident, or another scandal, that people made a lot of in the *California Journal*, and other publications of the day.

That had to do with the firing of Dr. Josette Mondanaro, who was in charge of the rehabilitation programs. Would you talk to me about that?

OBLEDO: Actually Governor Brown made the decision to discharge her. I didn't know her. I didn't know of her work, or anything else. But she was labeled as a "lesbian," if I recall correctly. And so the lesbian community made a big deal out of it. The firing of Dr. Mondanaro, is that her name?

VASQUEZ: So it was just peripheral to your activities, it was more against Governor Brown?

OBLEDO: Right.

VASQUEZ: While you were Secretary of Health and Welfare it is noticeable, when one reads the record that you were out in the Hispanic community a lot.

OBLEDO: I was.

VASQUEZ: You spoke at hundreds of dinners, Cinco de Mayos, and community councils. Why?

OBLEDO: Well, I wanted the people to recognize that we were in government, that they had a stake in it, that they had access to government and they ought to take advantage of the situation, to improve the quality of life for themselves and others.

VASQUEZ: You even got involved in comments and positions on a topic that probably was not politically wise, at the time. Probably the one that most comes to mind is your position on immigration policy. Did that cause you some political leverage?

OBLEDO: No, surprisingly it did not. I made a speech one time calling for an open border and converting the INS [Immigration and Naturalization Service] to a reception agency to welcome the immigrants and to direct them to places where jobs were

available and schools were available and to regulate activities. But I thought I would get a lot of flak for that speech, but I didn't. So that was surprising.

VASQUEZ: Let me get into that then. Expand on that. I was going to save this discussion for later when we talk about international relations and the international activities you were involved in. But since we're there now, what's your thinking, what is the logic between having and not having an open border with Mexico?

OBLEDO: Well I think that we ought to have an open border, not only in capital goods and services but in human beings. I think they add a lot to our economy. After all, most immigrants live in Texas and California and those are the two most productive states in the United States. So they must add to our economy, it only stands to reason. We have a lot of land here. We have a lot of jobs here that people who live here don't perform, so we could always use that labor in human capital. And I think that since Mexico is so close to us, we should import the people this United States, let them work here for a period of time, and then they can go back home if they desire.

VASQUEZ: Would you be adverse to, or be supportive of, a dual citizenship for Mexican citizens.

OBLEDO: I believe in the dual citizenship. I think that is the case now. Where people can be both Mexicans and Americans at the same time.

VASQUEZ: What would you say to those who say that no other country in the world has an open border? That [it] would cause nightmarish security problems for the United States.

OBLEDO: Well I don't think so, I think that the program of an open border can be regulated to the extent that it is a workable situation for both countries, and both countries would really benefit from it.

VASQUEZ: We will come back to U.S.-Mexico relations. What do you think was your greatest accomplishment as Health and Welfare secretary? You were there seven years?

OBLEDO: I was there seven years [Vásquez talks (inaudible)] Right. I think my greatest accomplishment was bringing Hispanics and other people of color into state government to work. I'm very proud of that. And I think that is my legacy to state government. Because I was able to bring in hundreds of people into state government with good jobs, etc. that were in policy-making positions, that had a lot of impact on our community.

VASQUEZ: Let me ask you a more intimate question now, and that has to do with your relationship with the governor. A number of times you threatened to resign, more than once. And said that you would resign unless the governor asked you to stay. Was that a tactic, or was that something that [indicated] a conflict between the two of you?

OBLEDO: No. At the time there [were] a couple of situations where I felt that I had to leave. But the governor was very supportive and urged me to stay. He was very supportive of my ideas, my philosophy, etc. He never got after me for anything I ever did in state government. So I felt an obligation to stay and help, as long as I could.

beginning and now related enough to the business and with which I am familiar that I can say I have 7000-8000

customers that have additional credit or account information and I can make up to

10000-12000 more sales in a month based upon those numbers.

My best estimate is that I will generate about \$3000 or more revenue this year.

I believe that there are 7000-8000 people that will be interested in transitioning to my company.

It is my opinion that the transition will be successful if I can get them to understand

the value of what we offer and how it will benefit them, how it will benefit their company,

and how it will benefit the customer. A company with a good reputation

is hard to do, especially one that is trying to change and bring new things into the company.

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VASQUEZ: There were a couple of times when there [were] testimonials dinners at which a thousand, two thousand, Hispanics showed up...

OBLEDO: Right.

VASQUEZ: ... and the governor attended these events...

OBLEDO: That's right.

VASQUEZ: ...because of your support for him, or for his [own] political ambitions?

OBLEDO: No, he was very supportive. He attended those events, they were very moving events, in fact, a lot of people were supporting me, and I was extremely glad [for] that support.

VASQUEZ: Let me ask you something that may be an impressionistic kind of question, but at the time, I remember liberals being frustrated with Governor Brown. Because Governor Brown came into office as a fiscal conservative, someone that was going to, in fact he used the term, "compassion fatigue" and he was going to toughen up on things. Did you ever have conflicts with that?

OBLEDO: No I didn't. He used to say that, "less was more," for instance. So he was a fiscal conservative, but he never cut the budget of Health and Welfare. He was a very social liberal, so-to-speak, very progressive.

VASQUEZ: What is your opinion about his track record in bringing minorities, not only into state government, but also into the judicial branch of government?

OBLEDO: Well, it was a record that I would've been proud of. He never objected to the fact that I used to bring him; I mean hundreds of people, into state government, minorities etc. In fact I had thirteen departments under my authority, and when I

• Chapter 10 includes a discussion of how to make your resume stand out.

• Chapter 11 includes a discussion of how to write a cover letter.

• Chapter 12 includes a discussion of how to prepare for an interview.

• Chapter 13 includes a discussion of how to follow up after an interview.

• Chapter 14 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job search.

• Chapter 15 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job interview.

• Chapter 16 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job offer.

• Chapter 17 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job rejection.

• Chapter 18 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job offer.

• Chapter 19 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job interview.

• Chapter 20 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job offer.

• Chapter 21 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job interview.

• Chapter 22 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job interview.

• Chapter 23 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job interview.

• Chapter 24 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job interview.

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• Chapter 26 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job interview.

• Chapter 27 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job interview.

• Chapter 28 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job interview.

• Chapter 29 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job interview.

• Chapter 30 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job interview.

• Chapter 31 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job interview.

• Chapter 32 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job interview.

• Chapter 33 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job interview.

• Chapter 34 includes a discussion of how to prepare for a job interview.

left government, ten of those departments had reached parity, population parity.

So I was extremely proud of that.

VASQUEZ: How about current administrations in the government. Is that there now?

OBLEDO: I think so. I don't think that [an equivalent number] has ever been reached.

VASQUEZ: What was your sentiment towards Governor Brown's aspirations to be president?

OBLEDO: Well, actually I was very supportive; I thought he'd make a great president, because he is a great idea man. He has a lot of ideas, he's a visionary. So I was very supportive of him. I'm sorry that he didn't win.

VASQUEZ: It's been said about Governor Brown that there is a disconnect between the ideas that he has and the people that he brings in to implement [them]. Is that fair?

OBLEDO: I don't think that's fair. Actually there is a little truth to that statement because he had so many ideas, and a lot of them never got implemented. But some of them did, and I think he has had his mind on the future.

VASQUEZ: Was he, in your mind, the ideal combination of visionary and implementer? Or activist?

OBLEDO: Yes he was, he still is to this day.

VASQUEZ: Now he is the mayor of Oakland.

OBLEDO: Right.

VASQUEZ: And do you see [that step] as consistent with his approach to politics?

OBLEDO: Yes, I think he is in a position where he can help people, and Oakland certainly needs a lot of help. So I think he's in the right position at the right time.

VASQUEZ: Did you know his father? [Governor Edmund G. Brown, Sr.]

OBLEDO: I met his father on two or three occasions.

ability without any further technical support or intervention. The
ability to have a positive impact on the environment and society is
the main goal of the company's culture and its mission. The
company has a strong focus on innovation and research, and it is
committed to developing sustainable products and services.
The company's products are designed to be safe and effective, and
they are made from natural ingredients. The company also
uses renewable energy sources and has a low carbon footprint.
The company's mission is to provide high-quality products
that are good for the environment and society. The company
is committed to making a positive impact on the world and
to creating a better future for everyone.

VASQUEZ: But you didn't know him well.

OBLEDO: I didn't know him well. No.

VASQUEZ: But you knew his reputation.

OBLEDO: Oh very much so. I think he is the greatest governor the State ever had, really.

VASQUEZ: Governor Edmund Brown.

OBLEDO: Governor Brown Sr.

VASQUEZ: But is there a disconnect, as much of a disconnect, between the governor and his son as people say?

OBLEDO: No, I don't think so. I think his son takes after his dad. His dad did a lot for California in the way of freeways, education, and the University system. So many other things that he did for the state of California.

VASQUEZ: So you lasted seven years [on Governor Brown's Cabinet].

OBLEDO: I did.

VASQUEZ: Did you ever have conflicts with other members of the administration?

OBLEDO: No, not really. We all got along fairly well.

VASQUEZ: In both administrations?

OBLEDO: Yes, both times.

VASQUEZ: Did support wane in the second administration, for the governor, or for your activities?

OBLEDO: Oh no, it continued full blast until I left.

VASQUEZ: Lets move on to something that is of great interest to a lot of people, and that is your 1982 run for Governor, in the Democratic primary.

OBLEDO: Yes.

VASQUEZ: You entered the primary kind of late [didn't] you.

OBLEDO: No, I think I entered it in February.

VASQUEZ: In February, of '82?

OBLEDO: '82, right.

VASQUEZ: But [State Controller] Ken Cory and [State Senator] John Garamendi, and people like that had been running since '81.

OBLEDO: And [Mayor Tom] Bradley, yes for a long time.

VASQUEZ: What made you think that you, and you had a very confident posture at that time that you could win the primary?

OBLEDO: Well, for one thing I was well known. For a second, the Hispanic community was registering to vote in large numbers. I thought perhaps that if we could unify our own community, that I would have a good chance at it. It takes about a million votes to win the primary, and we had 1.2 million registered voters. So I thought that was a possibility of getting that vote in the bloc and then trying to [siphon away] some votes from the Anglo community, and the Black community.

VASQUEZ: Did you think that you had the capability to raise the necessary amount of money?

OBLEDO: Well I thought initially that I did, but it turned out that I didn't.

VASQUEZ: You raised what, a million dollars?

OBLEDO: Over a million dollars.

VASQUEZ: And some of the other people were raising five, six million?

OBLEDO: Five, six million...right.

VASQUEZ: Was that a factor?

OBLEDO: Oh certainly, it takes a lot of money to win an election.

VASQUEZ: In what part of the state did you do the best?

OBLEDO: Down south, in Los Angeles and those areas out there.

Where there [are] more Hispanics.

VASQUEZ: You do well in some of the Northern districts... (inaudible) with large Hispanic populations...(inaudible)

OBLEDO: Yes.

VASQUEZ: Were these all places that you had visited or spoken to...

OBLEDO: Where people knew me, and my track record.

VASQUEZ: Some people, at the time, criticized you saying that you might have been responsible for the fact that Tom Bradley didn't win the [general] election.

OBLEDO: Well he won; Tom Bradley won the primary and lost the general election by a hundred thousand votes or so. So he came really close, and I think that his primary problem was that he was a Black and [George] Deukmejian capitalized on that. So I think that was a deciding factor in the election.

VASQUEZ: Were all of your former advisors, and friends, all in agreement that you should run?

OBLEDO: Well all the ones that I had recruited did. Maybe I just recruited people that I knew would urge me to vote, run.

VASQUEZ: (inaudible)

OBLEDO: Right.

VASQUEZ: But you had no old-time advisors or friends that told you, "Mario, maybe you shouldn't do it, it's not the time?"

OBLEDO: Not that I recall, No.

VASQUEZ: You got a lot of press nationally.

OBLEDO: Yes.

VASQUEZ: As the result of it, (inaudible, Obledo remarks and interrupts audio)

OBLEDO: I hesitated to run because Bradley was in the race. And Bradley is Black, and everyone considered him Black. Although he was not considered Black in many Black areas, and he still ran. He ran a good race. He'd been mayor of L.A. for a number of years. He was well known, he was very articulate, and he won the primary.

VASQUEZ: But he wasn't well known outside of Los Angeles.

OBLEDO: Well he was well known in San Francisco and other areas. He had been there and traveled the state.

VASQUEZ: What do you think was the legacy of that race?

OBLEDO: Well I think it probably encouraged other people to run for public office. It gave them the thought that maybe they could win, that they could make a contribution. So I think I may have motivated people to run for public office.

VASQUEZ: After you lost the primary, what did you do then?

OBLEDO: I joined the Bradley camp, in his campaign for the governorship. I worked closely with him.

VASQUEZ: What were your duties then?

OBLEDO: Oh, I just was making phone calls to people, asking my supporters to support Bradley, etc.

VASQUEZ: Did you think that you encouraged enough supporters to do that?

OBLEDO: I think so.

VASQUEZ: What else did you do after that?

OBLEDO: Then, I joined the law firm here in Sacramento.

VASQUEZ: I'm sorry I didn't hear you.

OBLEDO: Alcalá and Cabral Law Firm, and I stayed there for about a year.

VASQUEZ: And what did you practice?

OBLEDO: Just general practice of law.

VASQUEZ: And then after that year?

OBLEDO: After that year, I came out and practiced solo. I left the firm and opened my office here, and I have been here ever since. At this location.

VASQUEZ: In this location?

OBLEDO: 928 Second Street, in Old Sacramento.

VASQUEZ: When did you decide to get back into public life by running for LULAC president?

OBLEDO: It was 1985, '83 really. I served from 1983 through 1985 during those years. Then I became the chairman of the board at the National Rainbow Coalition.

VASQUEZ: Lets get back to the to LULAC.

OBLEDO: All right.

VASQUEZ: When one goes to the University of the Pacific archives, and when one looks at Arnold Torres' papers, there is a comment that's made about your succeeding Tony Bonilla when Bonilla was president. Let me read to you a little bit of what it says, "When Bonilla stepped out as National president in 1984, he was replaced by the more conservative Mario Obledo. At this time conservatives within LULAC, then calling for Torres' ouster said that with the newly elected ultra-

conservative Reagan's administration, an aggressive Liberal would render an ineffective spokesman for Hispanics." How do you respond to that characterization of you being a more [conservative candidate]? Once you were considered more liberal, now more conservative than Tony Bonilla?

OBLEDO: Well, I find that not to be a truthful statement because I think that I am as liberal as Tony Bonilla was. My record proved it. So I do not know where they got this business of being conservative, unless the fact that I'm quiet, reserved, don't make a lot of noise [about] my activities. But other than that....

VASQUEZ: Tell me about your tenure as LULAC president. What were the main issues of the day, and what you think was your greatest endeavor?

OBLEDO: Well it's always been the same problems: in the field of education and health, and employment etc., things that we were already trying to do. But I tried to expand the organization into the international arena by visiting Cuba, Nicaragua, Central America, South America, etc. I was trying to get the Latin American people from the Western Hemisphere to work together.

VASQUEZ: Did you catch a lot of flak for that?

OBLEDO: Oh yes, I did.

VASQUEZ: Even in LULAC?

OBLEDO: Even within LULAC. People didn't feel I ought to be traveling abroad to expand the ideas of LULAC, and I obviously disagreed with that.

VASQUEZ: Did you ever know Dr. Ernesto Galarza?

OBLEDO: I met him once, but I really didn't know him,

VASQUEZ: You didn't know what his activities were during the Bracero Program?

OBLEDO: Yes, to some extent I am familiar with it.

VASQUEZ: Did that inspire you at all, did that shape any of your activities?

OBLEDO: No, not really.

VASQUEZ: One more time, tell me what you think you accomplished. Lets pick it up when you started getting involved with Jesse Jackson, and before you left LULAC, while you were president and you were telling me [off tape] about the Southland Corporation, I'm sorry.

OBLEDO: Well we drew up an agreement with the Southland Corporation to give more jobs to minorities, more contracts, and more equal opportunity. So Rainbow Coalition and LULAC joined forces at that time.

VASQUEZ: Did you get any opposition from some of your colleagues at LULAC for such a thing?

OBLEDO: No, I didn't.

VASQUEZ: Really?

OBLEDO: Yes. In fact, I used to advocate working closely with the Blacks to form a very powerful coalition between Blacks and the Hispanics. That would create a tremendous political bloc.

VASQUEZ: Was there always an agreement on the Black side, towards that kind of coalition?

OBLEDO: Well, [it] was generally accepted, I'd never had anyone openly oppose it.

VASQUEZ: When did you start getting involved with the Martin Luther King Jr. national holiday?

OBLEDO: During the time that I was the National president of LULAC, I got appointed to the commission, the Martin Luther King Jr. Commission. We pushed some

legislation through that granted the Commission some monies for meetings etc. A federal grant, if you will. We lobbied the state legislatures for a Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, federal holiday, we were mostly successful, so I left the commission when I left the presidency of LULAC

VASQUEZ: What was the greatest opposition to the Martin Luther King holiday?

[End Tape 2, Side A]

the organization of whom were given up and I only learned their names through
when I visited a post exchange store which had been taken over by the Army. I only learned
all that I can tell because I have never spoken to any of them, and I am not

sure if I can tell you all about it. The reason why is that I have no documents
regarding the organization of which I have no information and now and I am not going to

[A.M. I don't know]

[Begin Tape 2, Side B]

OBLEDO: I left the commission when I left the presidency of LULAC

VASQUEZ: What was the greatest opposition to the Martin Luther King holiday?

OBLEDO: Well you know there's still a lot of racial animosity in the United States, so we encountered that, now and then, actually it's racial discrimination against Blacks for no apparent reason, so that was a problem in trying to get a Martin Luther King Jr. holiday.

VASQUEZ: One of the states that resisted that was Arizona.

OBLEDO: Right.

VASQUEZ: And, at one point, the LULAC cancelled its convention that they had scheduled for, I guess Tucson, is that right?

OBLEDO: I forgot, I think it was Phoenix.

VASQUEZ: Phoenix, I'm sorry.

OBLEDO: Yes. We did [it] as a protest to the states inaction in creating a holiday.

VASQUEZ: Whom did you work with on that commission. Coretta [Scott] King?

OBLEDO: Coretta King.

VASQUEZ: Could you mention some other folks...?

OBLEDO: Well there was some [U.S.] Senators, and Congressmen on the commission, some Governors on the commission, I forgot exactly who sat on the commission. They were a very prominent group of [people].

VASQUEZ: After you [left] LULAC, what kinds of things [did] you get involved with?
[Were] you only involved in the Rainbow Coalition?

[2 min. & equal weight]

"collected by Mr. J. C. H. [unclear] and I made calculations that £1 = 1000.00

"collected just before arrival of the first two ships, which were fully £5000 each

"and the present £1000.00 of ghee money given to us by the Chieftain who says £1 = 1000.00

"Actual money remitted to us by ghee and has been sent back home

"which should be the amount of the money sent with the previous amounts so that

"£1 = 1000.00 and £1000.00 = £1000.00 and £1000.00 = £1000.00

"Actual money remitted to us by ghee and sent off to us £5000 each

"Actual money remitted to us by ghee and sent off to us £5000 each

"Collected back again and remitted to us £1000.00 and taken care by AmA £5000 each

"Actual money remitted to us by ghee and sent off to us £5000 each

"Actual money remitted to us by ghee and sent off to us £5000 each

"Actual money remitted to us by ghee and sent off to us £5000 each

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"Actual money remitted to us by ghee and sent off to us £5000 each

OBLEDO: Yes I [was] principally. I [was] still involved with MALDEF and the Southwest Voter Registration Project, all during those years, but basically my focus was on the Rainbow Coalition.

VASQUEZ: Were you practicing law at the time?

OBLEDO: Yes I was, here in Sacramento, in this office in fact.

VASQUEZ: Tell me about Jesse Jackson's run for President.

OBLEDO: Well it was exciting, I traveled with him, and I campaigned with him. I thought he was ready for the presidency, I thought he'd make a great president, because he's very idealistic and he's a hard worker. He likes to implement things. So this would have been a different country now, had he become President.

VASQUEZ: Was the country not ready for it?

OBLEDO: Well it depends; it was not because he lost. But I think that if he ran this year he might be able to make it, or in the future, we will have a Black President.

VASQUEZ: What does a Black candidate for president do to the political discourse of the country?

OBLEDO: Well it depends on his ideas. Jesse Jackson is very articulate, he's a visionary, and he's got a lot of charisma. He's done a lot of good for the country already by traveling abroad, as you know he brought the prisoners back from Bosnia, or from Kosovo, and before them he had freed a flyer from Iran, or someplace like that. So he's a good public relations person. Good for this country.

VASQUEZ: Why do you think Latinos didn't vote for him?

OBLEDO: Well there are still certain reservations about Blacks in the Latino community. We're guilty of prejudice in the same vein as the Anglo community is towards

Blacks, I believe. But I think that we've come a long ways in trying to work together, since we all have the same problems.

VASQUEZ: There's another organization, the California Coalition of Hispanic Organizations that you are instrumental in starting in 1974, is that correct?

OBLEDO: Right.

VASQUEZ: Tell me about that organization, up to the time that you were at the Rainbow Coalition.

OBLEDO: Well, I thought it was time that Hispanic organizations come together for a common purpose, in trying to promote equal opportunities for Hispanics in state government, both in the private and public sectors. So that's why we started the coalition. There were various, numerous Mexican-American organizations in California and I thought it would bring them together, to the table; we would have a common purpose and work together.

VASQUEZ: And, has that organization waned or grown....?

OBLEDO: It went out of existence for a while, but we re-established the organization about three years ago. And now I'm the President and Keda Alcalá is the Executive Director. So we're starting to move again, becoming involved in issues. For instance, we've become involved in the farm worker issue, where the federal government wanted to bring Guest Workers into the United States. We fought that legislation, and it was defeated. Now, we've become pro-active and are drafting a "farm worker bill of rights," to be submitted to the Congress. [It is] calling for rights in the fields of health, wages, housing etc., for farm workers.

VASQUEZ: How many organizations belong to this coalition?

OBLEDO: About, 50 organizations.

VASQUEZ: Throughout California or...?

OBLEDO: Throughout California. Recently we've become the National Coalition of Hispanic Organizations, hopefully expanding our reach in the other states and try to recruit organizations from various states in the United States.

VASQUEZ: A high profile issue that took place in the last couple of years had to do with your opposition to the racist approach to immigration policies. There was a notorious billboard put up at the California border with Arizona. It said, "Welcome to California," what was it, "The Immigrant state?" Something like that?

OBLEDO: "The Land of the Illegal Immigrant."

VASQUEZ: The land of the illegal immigrant. And your response was, in your own public statement, that if that wasn't taken down you would personally go out and burn it down.

OBLEDO: That's correct.

VASQUEZ: What was your intent of making a statement like that?

OBLEDO: Well, I wanted to bring it to the public's attention – how racist some people were. If [I were] given the opportunity to argue for the immigrants, for their contributions to the state of California and to the United States, and I think those contributions outweigh any negative aspects of immigration.

VASQUEZ: Did you think that was the best way to go about it? By making an inflammatory statement like that?

OBLEDO: Well I thought that if they refused to take it down voluntarily, which I had hoped they would, that I would just burn it down.

VASQUEZ: And you were intent on carrying through with it?

OBLEDO: Yes, very much so.

VASQUEZ: What was the outcome of that?

OBLEDO: Well, the advertising company who had put up the billboard for rent, called the Fair Immigration Reform group and asked them to take the billboard down because it was creating a lot of havoc. So they took it down.

VASQUEZ: Did it ever go back up?

OBLEDO: No. It went up in Arizona for a day, they put it up someplace and it was taken down the following day, because the public objected to it. The governor of Arizona took my side on the issue.

VASQUEZ: What was his name?

OBLEDO: It's her name, but I forgot her name. [Governor Jane D. Hull]

VASQUEZ: What about politicians here in California? What was their posture?

OBLEDO: Well most of them didn't get involved in the issue, but I would think that they would side with me, knowing California politics.

VASQUEZ: Tell me more [about] other issues that you have been involved with in the Coalition, if you will, in the past 10 years?

OBLEDO: Well, in the last 3 years is the Coalition.

VASQUEZ: Is that how long it's been, in the last 3 years?

OBLEDO: Right. Well, we're becoming involved in the school issues here in Sacramento.

VASQUEZ: For example...

OBLEDO: Classroom curriculum, classroom size, bilingual education, etc., etc. We've also become involved in [an] issue in the [Salinas] Valley, 10 miles south of Salinas, a

the drive against communism we could show very little. 15310204

to have given us? - 10003300

Such a situation should not? - 15310204

well before you get involved with all the other things that have been done. 15310204

which would fit all right with what I had in mind, was to do something with?

the people you are going to do something with? - 10003300

you know how to do? - 15310204

and why does that matter to me? and what can you do? if nothing else? - 10003300

so there's still a lot of things which can be done, and you might think about

what you can do with what you have available. 15310204

you know how to do? - 10003300

that's what you will want to do if you wanted to? - 10003300

but it's also important to make sure that you have the right kind of equipment? - 15310204

and what kind of things you have to have to do what you have to do? - 10003300

so that you can do what you have to do? - 15310204

and if you have the right kind of equipment, you have the right

kind of things you have to have to do what you have to do? - 15310204

so that you can do what you have to do? - 10003300

so that you can do what you have to do? - 15310204

so that you can do what you have to do? - 10003300

so that you can do what you have to do? - 15310204

so that you can do what you have to do? - 10003300

so that you can do what you have to do? - 15310204

town called Chualar, where there are about 800 Mexican-American families living. They didn't have safe drinking water, so I got on the federal government and the county government to improve the situation. Now I understand, I got a letter last week telling me that the county had tested the water and it was drinkable. So that was an accomplishment. We've also gotten involved in discrimination in the University [of California] system, against hiring of faculty etc. So we're on that project now.

VASQUEZ: Do people come to you with these issues, or do you go out and look for them?

OBLEDO: It works both ways. Some people call it to our attention, like the Chualar case, was called to our attention by an organization, other things we've just become proactive and initiated the issues ourselves.

VASQUEZ: The "Chualar Case" being the [drinking] water [issue]?

OBLEDO: Water.

VASQUEZ: I find something interesting. [When] we were talking [off tape] about your participation in issues of foreign policy in this country and traveling abroad, for example when you were president of LULAC, going to Cuba and demanding to free political prisoners, and I suppose, getting some kind of criticism. But I see that you have been opposed to U.S. foreign policies at different points. To give an example, [regarding] Cuba it seems that you were opposed to the restrictive policies and wanting to open some type of dialogue. At the same time you were critical of the Cuban government during the [President George] Bush and [President Ronald W.] Reagan years. You were opposed to policies towards Nicaragua. In the case of Mexico, you've traveled to Mexico and many times

been opposed to different policies of immigration and even in the case of Argentina, you were on the side of Argentina in the Falkland Islands War. Let's take these one at a time and tell me what your thinking was behind that. First of all, you and foreign policy, as a Hispanic or Chicano leader. What do you have to say to that?

OBLEDO: Well, I think that as a community we do not have an impact on foreign policy at the present time. There are very few of us in foreign governmental affairs, very few of us in the State Department, very few of us ever speak out and let our feelings known about foreign policies. I [have] disagreed with our foreign policies on numerous occasions, for instance, during the Vietnam War. I disagree with ... the embargo towards Cuba now. I disagree with [our foreign policies] on the matter of some of the African countries and the policies we have now...

VASQUEZ: For example?

OBLEDO: Well, we didn't help some of the African nations when they were undergoing civil strife, and the [recent] massacres. And yet, we get involved in Kosovo.

VASQUEZ: You mean the case of Rwanda?

OBLEDO: Yes. Yet, we got involved in Kosovo. I don't understand it.

VASQUEZ: What comes to mind? What do you think is behind that?

OBLEDO: Well I have no idea, except that people are not knowledgeable, [those who] run the State [Department]. Just like I have never understood our policy toward Cuba. One time I was going to Cuba and I visited with the State Department. I asked them what they wanted from Castro, in order to have a [normalized] relationship.

• The second part of our bus will be used for a walking tour of London, and
• And we'll travel around the city to visit landmarks and attractions.

• So far I don't think you will be able to get a better deal than this one.

• And the bus will be able to go where the other ones can't go because

• It's a bus that has been converted into a mobile bus.

• So you will be able to get a better deal than the others.

• So you will be able to get a better deal than the others.

• So you will be able to get a better deal than the others.

• So you will be able to get a better deal than the others.

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• So you will be able to get a better deal than the others.

• So you will be able to get a better deal than the others.

• So you will be able to get a better deal than the others.

"Well," they said, "We want Castro to bring his soldiers back home, free political prisoners.

VASQUEZ: From Angola?

OBLEDO: Yes, from Angola, at that point. Free political prisoners and institute Democracy. And so I went to Castro and asked him to sever his ties with the Soviet Union and he said, "Well, I will do that tomorrow, provided that Americans bring their troops back home, provided it frees its political prisoners, provided that it severs its ties with the Soviet Union." He said, "All I want is equal treatment, to be looked at with dignity and respect, that is all I am asking." Well, obviously the U.S. was not about to bring its troops back home, or sever its ties with the Soviet Union. So we are asking the impossible.

VASQUEZ: And, in the case of Central America, specifically Nicaragua?

OBLEDO: Well, in Nicaragua, I always felt we were supporting the wrong cause. The Sandinistas had gained power [and] were trying to democratize Nicaragua, but we were supporting the "anti" [Contra] Forces. And so I never understood why we got involved with that.

VASQUEZ: In the case of Mexico and immigration policy, you talked a little while ago about an open border between Mexico and the United States. Explain to me, if you will, your understanding of what are the issues and what are the stakes [of a good] relationship between Mexico and the United States.

OBLEDO: I think that Mexico is very important in the United States in world affairs. They are our next-door neighbors, are a great [importer] of United States [goods], we have common communications etc., This matter of immigration is a serious

matter that has been going on for years. When I advocated an open border I suggested that the INS be converted to an information referral agency that the immigrants would stop there and they would be directed to places to live, where schools were available, [where] jobs were available, and after some time they would be returned to Mexico. But they would be living here without fear of apprehension, of deportation. We would benefit from their labor and so the Mexican would benefit because he would be working. Actually, the things that caused the immigration is the poor economic situation in Mexico. That is what drives the immigrant up here. I have a lot of respect for them because they are willing to die in order to come to the United States. Recently there have been over 1,500 deaths, down in the valleys of Arizona and California – people crossing the desert and mountains and they froze or they starved to death out in the desert. They have literally given up their lives to come here.

VASQUEZ: What would you say to those people? Would Mexico allow Americans to go into Mexico and have the same benefits as Mexican citizens, since Mexico has such stricter immigration policies itself?

OBLEDO: Well I don't know. I would have to talk to the Mexican government about that, but I do not think that they would fear Americans going into Mexico. I may be wrong at that, but Americans would not want to perform the work the Mexicans do in Mexico, for the wages that are being paid in Mexico.

VASQUEZ: Americans do go and retire ...

OBLEDO: Oh yes, they have retirement villages

VASQUEZ: The Falklands War, what was your opposition to that?

OBLEDO: Well, England owns some islands off the coast of Argentina, which I thought rightfully belong to Argentina. Here England is half a world away from these islands. They have no business there. So I thought that rightfully they belonged to Argentina, and they should be given to Argentina.

VASQUEZ: Do you think American foreign policy is as important today as it was when you were in public office?

OBLEDO: Oh yes, it is even more important today.

VASQUEZ: Why?

OBLEDO: Because of the threat nuclear war annihilation, all it takes is one nuclear missile to destroy a city. And we could destroy all of human kind by nuclear war. So I think that is very important that good relations be established by nations in order to get along and in order to live together in this planet.

VASQUEZ: How has the world changed as a result of the decline of the Soviet Union as an opposition to the United States?

OBLEDO: I don't think it's changed very, very much. Obviously Russia is not a big superpower anymore. So I don't think we have to worry about them. But there are so many outbreaks of civil war around the world: In India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan in Turkey, with the Kurds. African countries, [places] all over the globe you have these conflicts. In Ireland, in Israel, so I don't know what the solution is to those problems.

VASQUEZ: Now that the United States is, I guess, the only real world super power, what responsibility does that bring the United States?

about I didn't understand how the double state came about? Now "2012.100

you must have been a bit confused with so much of ground suddenly

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as it's not too late to make a stand.

With regards to your question, would never in my life

have thought

of such a thing as a double state, but I do believe that it was a very good idea

and one that I believe has helped to bring about better relations between

the various organisations involved in the protection of our environment

and I hope that you will continue to support our work here.

As for the double state, I think it's a great idea and I think it's

the best way forward at the moment.

With regards to your last question, I think I probably

shouldn't say too much about it, but I do know that it's a very good idea

and one that I believe has helped to bring about better relations between

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and I hope that you will continue to support our work here.

OBLEDO: We have the responsibility to bring peace and harmony to the world. To establish a better quality of life [so] that nobody starves to death; that nobody dies of illnesses that could be treated; that we establish a better quality of life for all peoples on earth.

VASQUEZ: Let me shift to something a little more intimate, a little more personal. You have a philosophy of life, which you set to pen and paper. I'll read it to you, if you don't mind. [Tell me] if anything has changed as a result of a half-century of public service. You say: "Wake up each day determined to be happy. Do not let anyone or anything deviate you from this goal. Keep in mind that life is uncertain; each day should be lived as if it was your last. Remember that you are on this earth only once and at most for a few thousands weeks. So make this day as pleasant as possible. Treat persons with respect and courtesy, if you are not able to do so, then avoid them. Establish your priorities and follow them. Take good care of your physical, mental, and spiritual health. Satisfy your needs and desires, never to excess. Always keep them within the bounds of established moral and ethical standards. Seek financial security early in life, so that in later years you can enjoy leisure time and be in a position to help others with funding contributions. Keep company with those you enjoy and from whom happiness abounds. Strongly believe in yourself and everything about you, realizing that there is and only will be one of you in, the history of this universe. Always have faith in others and the Higher Power. Be honest to and with yourself, striving for the best. If you feel the need, never fail to apologize, and to live by the Ten Commandments and live life by the Golden Rule.

OBLEDO: Well, I still believe by that philosophy, I try to anyway. I think it leads to a better life and a happy life. And you can enjoy yourself while you're living.

VASQUEZ: Would you still offer this advice to young people in today's world?

OBLEDO: I certainly would, every one of those points.

VASQUEZ: This is an opportunity for you to sort of summarize your career, for this interview anyway. What have you learned about people, about politics, about being an American citizen, in you're nearly half-century of public life?

OBLEDO: Well, America is the best place in the world. Everybody in the world would like to come to live here, because we have freedoms, we have job opportunities, even though we have some problems they are minor compared to problems of other nations. So this is the greatest place on earth – bar none. And so far as my relationship with people in politics, I find that most people are basically good. They are easy to get along with, they are willing to help. It's amazing. For instance, I found recently I have been very pleased because I have been confined to a wheel chair and I'm amazed with a number of the people who are willing to help with the wheel chair, putting it in the car, or getting it out, or getting it fixed. I'm simply amazed by the generosity expressed.

In politics, I think politics needs reformation, particularly because winning an elective office depends so much on how much money you have. If you don't have the money chances are you won't make it. If you have a lot of money it doesn't necessarily mean a victory but it means that you will make a good race, one way or another. So that the money thing ought to be changed. The contributions to

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political campaigns ought to be changed. Limitations ought to be placed [on how much money can be spent.]

VASQUEZ: Some people have argued that politics in America has gotten very negative, very vicious and personal, and many times the issues are not allowed to be the focus of the debate, but people's personal habits or private lives have become the issue. Do you agree with that, and what do you think the solution is?

OBLEDO: That's true in many campaigns where you get the negative ads, the negative responses, but it all depends on the candidate. If a candidate is a good person, has faith in the future, has faith in this country, he can run a campaign without bashing the opponent in negative terms.

VASQUEZ: So money, negativity, would have to be reformed?

OBLEDO: Reformed.

VASQUEZ: What do you say to young people that turn away from public service or civic service because they say it is just not worth the cost to their own private life, or to their own health even.

OBLEDO: I think that everyone ought to do public service at some point or another. I think that it is a great contribution. I think you get a lot of self-satisfaction from it, from your contribution to the betterment of life. So I think it is all worth it, no matter how great the sacrifice.

VASQUEZ: Is there anything that I might not have discussed, or might have asked that I didn't, or is there a statement that you would like to put into the record? To summarize your life, and [your] public life?

OBLEDO: Well I've been blessed to a great extent. I grew up in a very poor home, where I saw a lot of discrimination and police brutality. But I had faith. I had faith in the system. I went to a school where my basic language, which was Spanish, was condemned. We were not allowed to speak the language; we were punished for [speaking] it. I saw a lot of discrimination in housing, in job opportunities. And I thought I would devote my life to try to better those conditions as much as possible. And that is why I joined MALDEF. When I was working with MALDEF, I thought, "What a great opportunity. Here I am being paid for the work that I love to do," and I was getting a salary for it. So we encountered a lot of cases and I think we did a lot of good. Obviously there is still a lot to be done, but we made an effort to correct a lot of situations.

When we founded the Southwest Voter Registration Project, I thought that was the most important project in our community. I think that time has proven me right, because we have changed the political face in California and Texas.

Hispanics are more involved, they are running more and more for public office, they're winning more often. So we are getting there.

And actually politics is the ultimate solution, is the answer, to all of our problems. In politics, for instance, if you have a particular problem in a school district and you have a school board that's Hispanic or people who are allied with Hispanics, then they can change the situation simply by a motion and a call for a vote— and then a vote. And that's it. You do not have to litigate and spend thousands of dollars in a court case. The same way with city government. If you have a city council that is Hispanic or is comprised of people who are sympathetic to

Hispanic causes, then you can change a life of a city merely by votes. In the same way, Congress, and the President. The President can change things by a stroke of a pen. If he is sympathetic to our cause, he can change a lot of situations very readily and without a lot of effort. I encourage people to get involved in politics, to run for public office if possible. To do good if they win, to continue to try if they loose. Never to give up. I believe that a person ought to believe strongly in themselves and what they can do.

One of the things I counsel young people about is that early in life you ought to try to get financially secure. By that I mean, by getting involved in real estate, or insurance, studying the Wall Street Journal, learning about the stock market, the Dow Jones Averages, the NASDAQ. Learn all of those things and save some money for the future, for your retirement, for contributions [to causes] you believe in. But money is power. If you are financially secure, if you have money, you can pick up the phone and call any politician in America and they would get on the phone. If you are penniless, they won't pay attention to you. And that is just a fact of life. If you are rich, people will pay attention to you. If you are poor, no one will listen.

In addition to that, I think people neglect it, but health is a very important element in life. If you are healthy, anything is possible. If you are not, nothing is possible. So, take care of your health, get checkups, watch your diet, exercise. Someone said that the key to life was good health, having something to do, and someone to love. If you have those three things, you have a good life and I truly believe that. I have been very blessed. I have a wonderful wife, Keda Alcalá Obledo, who I have

been married to for about two years now. She has made me very happy, and made my life complete.

VASQUEZ: Some of the demographic projections that are being made now, indicate that in a very short time, less than 20 years, when numerically at least Hispanics will be a force to be contended. We see already, the beginnings of a catering to the Hispanic market, and the money that we spend in this country. If you were to be looking into the future, what do you see in the next 35 to 40 years for Hispanics in the United States?

OBLEDO: When we founded the Southwest Voter Registration Project, I made a statement that there could be 100 million Hispanics in the United States, but if we were not registered to vote, and didn't vote, it would mean nothing at all. So now we are getting empowered by encouraging people to register to vote. I made a statement that here in the state of California, every major government institution will be controlled by a Hispanic in the next 20 years and I'm talking about governor on down the line attorney general, all the public offices, all the institutions, all the school boards in the state.

The same way in Texas, it's going to happen eventually, where [we] will control every political office in the state. And I would think that in Florida the same thing would happen as with the Hispanics in other states. With all that power, with the Hispanics living in the seven major states of this country, we control the Electoral College that elects the president. But obviously, when that happens, when we gain the electoral leverage in Texas, in California, Florida, New York, and Pennsylvania, they will change the system that elects the president. Probably to a

majority vote, instead of the Electoral College, because we will be able to control the Electoral College votes and elect a president.

VASQUEZ: Do you think that we will make the same mistakes when we have that kind of leverage, or power, that others have made? How can we avoid that?

OBLEDO: Well, I would hope not. I would hope that we would be a more enlightened people, be more fair and equitable in our decisions and look out for all the people. Forget about the past, forget about the injuries, forget about the discrimination, just look forward to a better life for all people and try to make that possible through government decisions.

VASQUEZ: Mr. Obledo, thank you very much for this interview.

OBLEDO: Thank you very much.

[End Tape 2]

bottom of slide and this was cleaned again & handled with great care again.

After this the slide was dried and placed back in the original box.

The final test would be under vacuum which is what I did and my cost - \$200.00

This brought the test and failure which ended with the same physical

breakage of the glass and I now have two broken slides from my first attempt - \$100.00 - \$200.00 = \$300.00

Playing with the slide and glue has not been able to duplicate the first break of glass,

but I am going to try again with the same materials and see if I can get another result.

After this I will take the slide and put it in the oven at 300 degrees and see if it will hold up.

After this I will take the slide

and place it in the oven at 300 degrees and see if it holds up - cost plain \$100.00 - \$200.00 = \$300.00

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